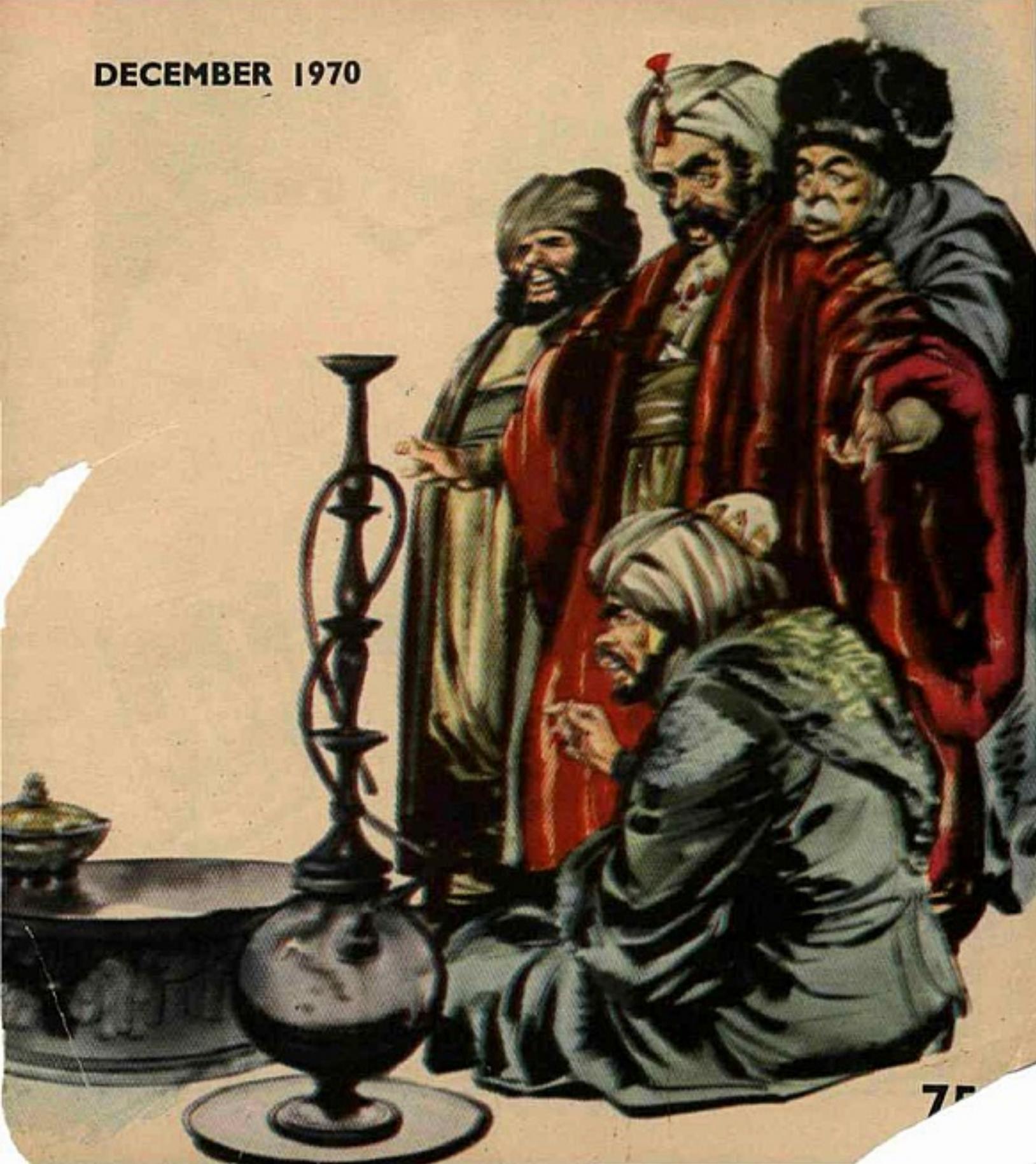


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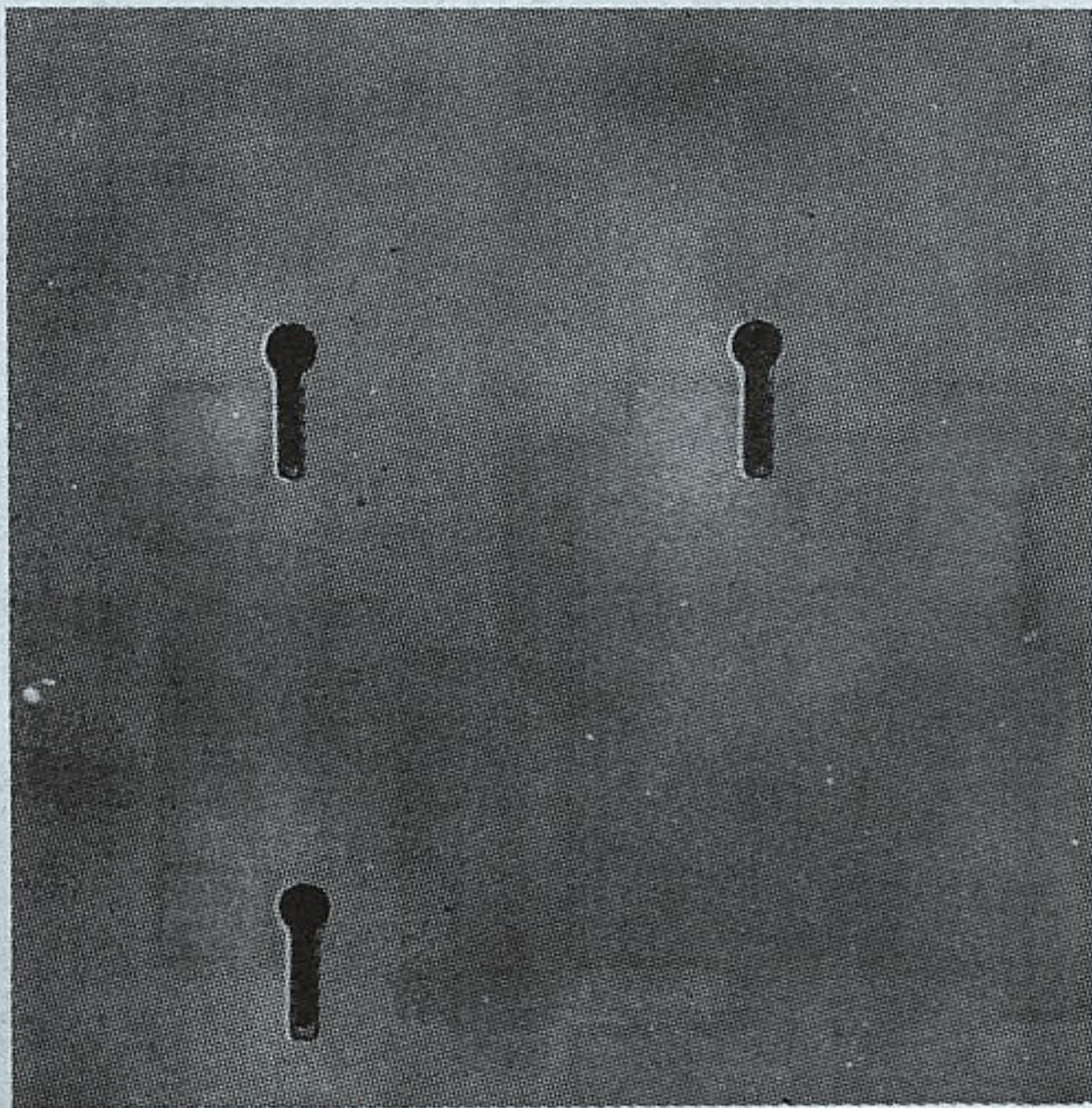
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*Here we are in December, with the festivities of Christmas and the New Year, just around the corner.*

*Giving gifts has always been a part of Christmas, but this is by no means a Christian tradition. The Romans also had a holiday at this time of the year, in honour of Saturn, their god of agriculture. This gay festivity was called Saturnalia, and the Romans gave their gifts on New Year's Day.*

*Father Christmas is a blend of many traditions. Scandinavia gave him his reindeer and sleigh. St. Nicholas, a bishop, who gave presents to children, gave him his alternative name, Santa Claus. His red suit and pointed hat, were originally a bishop's cape and mitre.*

Vol. 1

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# THE MONKEY PRINCESS

Long ago in India, there lived a wealthy Rajah, who had seven sons. He treated them all exactly alike, because he did not want them to become jealous of one another.

At last the time came for all seven sons to be married, but where could the Rajah find seven brides who would all be equal in every way?

The Rajah sent his ambassadors to the far ends of the land, but they could not find seven such girls. Although one maiden was very beautiful,

although another sang and played perfectly, although a third was very clever, nowhere could they find seven maidens equal in every way.

At last, the eldest and wisest of the Rajah's ambassadors went to his master and said, "Highness, we have tried to fulfil your wishes, but it is impossible. The solution to this problem must therefore be left to chance."

"What do you mean?" the Rajah asked him.

"Tell each of your sons to

take their bows and arrows and go to the top of the tallest tower," he said. "Each may shoot one arrow in any direction he chooses. The maiden who lives nearest to where each arrow falls shall become the bride of the prince who shot it. Each prince, of course, must promise to abide by the result."

The Rajah agreed on this and when he put this plan to his sons, they agreed also. The seven princes took their bows and arrows and went to the top of the tallest tower in the kingdom. Then, one by one, they fired their arrows far into the distance.

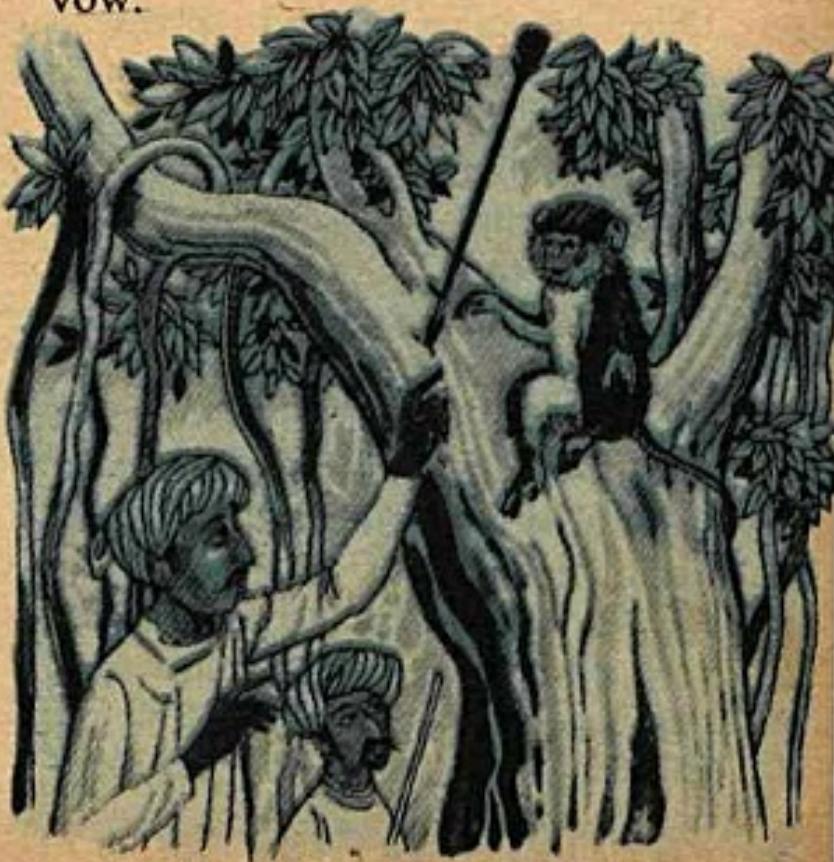
All the princes were worried, in case their arrows fell near the home of an ugly bad-tempered maiden, but, at first, all went well. The first six sons to shoot were all lucky, for their arrows found them six charming and beautiful brides.

However, the youngest son shot his arrow much farther than the others. It went far over the city wall and disappeared into a thick jungle. At last, it was found in the branches of an old banyan tree and sitting close by it was a monkey.

The Rajah was very sad and

insisted his youngest son must shoot again, but the prince refused to break his vow. As it seemed that Fate would not allow him a bride, he decided to make a pet of the little monkey that his arrow had fallen so close to. He named her Rani, which means Queen.

In the weeks that followed, there was great feasting and celebration at the palaces of the other six princes and their new brides. There were dances, banquets, parties and huge fire-work displays night after night. The Rajah was still heavy-hearted at the thought of his youngest son, sitting alone in his palace, but he knew that he could not make him break his vow.



One night, as the youngest prince sat in his palace, Rani, the little pet monkey, climbed on to his knee, as she often did when she thought her master looked sad.

"What can I do?" he asked her. "I would like to entertain my father, as my other brothers have done, but how can I? I have no wife. What shall I do, little Rani?"

Then to his surprise, the little monkey said, "Do not worry, master."

So saying, she skipped off and came back a few minutes later, clutching a piece of broken china, which she handed to him. On the back were written some words, instructing him to take it and throw it into the hollow banyan tree.

Next morning, when the prince awoke, he could not believe that Rani had actually spoken to him. He was sure he had dreamt it. However, he set forth into the jungle, back to the spot where his arrow had landed, and threw the piece of china into the hollow of the banyan tree.

As he did so, a beautiful girl appeared in the hollow and beckoned to him. As he followed her into the hollow,

she disappeared and the prince found himself in a dark, twisting tunnel. At last, the tunnel led out into a beautiful garden and there, seated on a throne on the terrace, was a maiden so lovely that the prince fell in love with her at once.

"So prince," she said, "you have come. I am glad, but you must come no closer. Go home and send the invitations to your celebration feast. Do only as I say."

The prince went home and told this story to the little monkey, Rani, but she said nothing.

When the prince awoke on the day of the celebrations, he was amazed to find that the whole palace had changed. It was far more beautiful than ever before, with new furnishings, rich tapestries and gold and silver ornaments. He went out into the gardens and found new pools, terraces and fountains. Everywhere he looked, there were colourful plants and shrubs.

Finally, the young prince's guests arrived and all were amazed at the lavish style in which they were entertained.

However the prince was worried. All the guests thought

that the celebrations were for his wedding. How could he explain what had happened? He certainly had no bride to introduce to them.

What, then, could he do? As soon as he was able, he slipped away to find Rani.

When he entered the room where he had left her, there sat, not Rani, but the beautiful lady.

"Prince," said she, "you wanted a bride. Here I am. As soon as I saw you, I fell in love with you, just as you did with me."

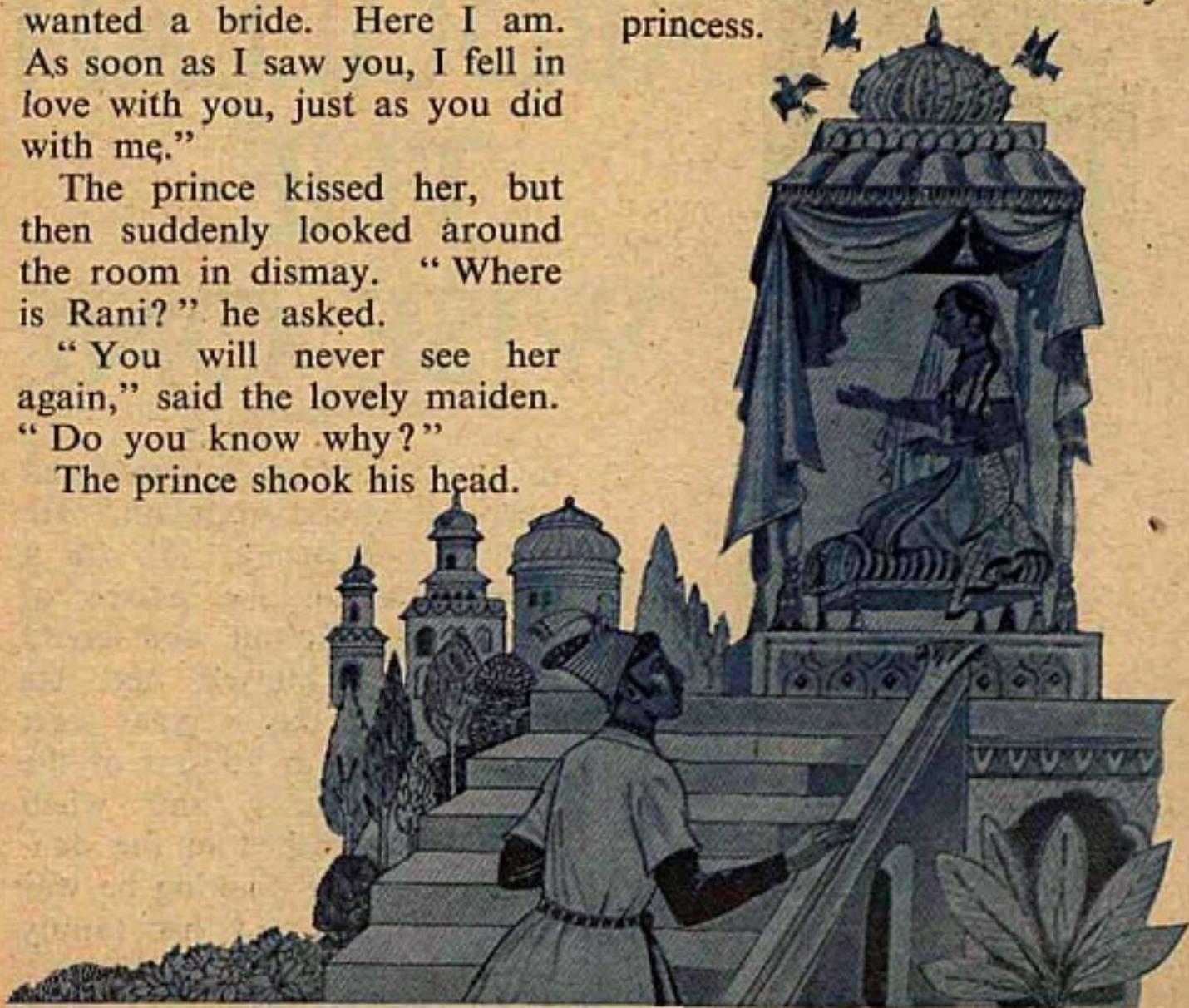
The prince kissed her, but then suddenly looked around the room in dismay. "Where is Rani?" he asked.

"You will never see her again," said the lovely maiden. "Do you know why?"

The prince shook his head.

"Because I was that monkey," she replied. "When your arrow landed in that tree, I changed myself into a monkey, to test you, to see if you would keep your vow. You have been faithful to it."

The prince embraced her joyfully. Then he took his lovely bride to be presented to his guests and join the celebrations, but of course, nobody guessed the secret of the monkey princess.





Sometimes Abdullah and his family had to go hungry.

# ABDULLAH THE WISE ONE

In an Arab country there lived a scholar named Abdullah. He had a poorly-paid job as a letter-writer in the palace of Sudam the Sultan and could hardly feed himself and his family. One day a great feast was arranged in honour of the Sultan's birthday and when Abdullah breathed in the delicious smells of cooking he was sure that he and his family would be invited.



Abdullah, however, was sadly disappointed. There were no invitations for him and his family. "Nobody thinks anything of me," he sighed, as he went home hungry.

Very sad he went to bed, but in the middle of the night he woke up his wife. "I have an idea that will make me rich and famous," he told his wife. "I shall become a wise man who knows everything."

He got up and went secretly to the Sultan's stable and took away Sudam's favourite white horse, which he led into a thick forest and tied to a tree.

"Now, my dear wife," he

said, "you must go to the palace and spread the news that I am Abdullah, the wise one."

The wife obeyed. Next day she was in the palace and saw the Sultan looking worried. "What is wrong?" she asked.

"My finest horse vanished in the night," Sultan Sudam replied. "Nobody can tell me where it is."

"Abdullah, my husband, is a wise man who sees and knows everything," said the wife. "Alas, today he is in bed, being weak through lack of food."

"Perhaps the poor man will be well enough to talk," said the



**Secretly he took the Sultan's horse and tied it to a tree in a thick forest.**

Sultan eagerly, and he hurried straight to Abdullah's house. The scholar seemed to be faint and weak but found strength to whisper that the Sultan would find his horse deep in the thick forest, tied to a tree.

When this was found to be true, the Sultan was overjoyed and for the next few days, Abdullah and his family had all the money and food they wanted. But news got round that a wonderful wise man had appeared and even the King of the Arab countries got to know about it.

The King summoned

Abdullah to him. "Wise man," he said, "a thief has stolen the crown jewels and only you can find them for me. By tomorrow morning you must give me the answer, or I shall have you severely punished as a fake."

Poor Abdullah! His teeth were chattering with fright as they took him to a room in a high tower and shut him in. "How can I know the answer?" he wailed.

The jewel-thief was a serving-woman in the court named Giva. She heard about the wise man and tiptoed to the room

in the tower and listened outside the door.

Not knowing that anybody was listening, Abdullah was on his knees, bewailing his fate. "It is all the fault of my tongue," he sobbed. "Yes, that is the truth," he went on in a louder voice. "The fault is that of *giva*." Being a clever scholar, Abdullah used the very ancient Arab word "*giva*" for "tongue" and when the woman heard it, she naturally thought that Abdullah was speaking her own name.

She rushed in and went down on her knees before him. "It is true," she cried. "I, *Giva*, stole the jewels. I beg you to spare my life, O wise one. The jewels are hidden at the foot of a pomegranate tree in the garden."

"You deserve to be punished," said Abdullah. "I will give you a chance, however, if you leave the country."

This the woman was only too eager to do, and next day when Abdullah was brought before the King he boldly declared that the stolen jewels would be found beneath the pomegranate tree. "Send a trusted servant to dig there," he said. "As for the blame, the thief will

never be caught."

When all this was found to be true, the King was amazed. But one of the courtiers wanted even more proof of the clever powers of Abdullah. "Your Majesty," he whispered, "this



**"Spare my life, O wise one," begged the serving woman.**

man might be in league with the thief. We must test him again."

The King agreed and while Abdullah was sent to another room, he ordered that a frog should be placed inside a golden dish with a lid over it.

Then Abdullah was brought in. "Tell me, wise one, what is hidden inside this dish," commanded the King.

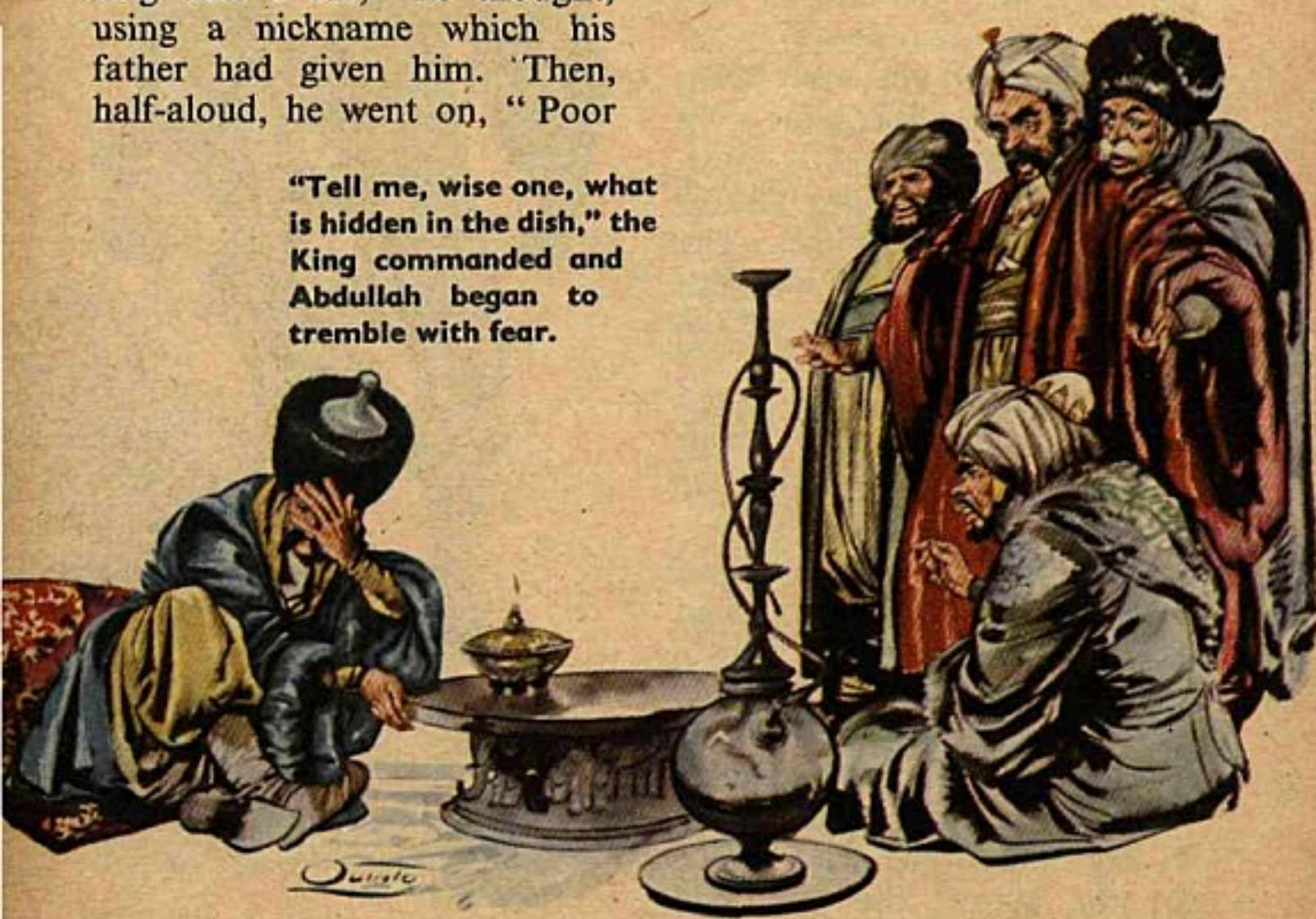
Abdullah trembled with fear. "Now I am lost, poor little frog that I am," he thought, using a nickname which his father had given him. Then, half-aloud, he went on, "Poor

**"Tell me, wise one, what is hidden in the dish," the King commanded and Abdullah began to tremble with fear.**

little frog indeed! Now you are in a trap and who can help you to escape?"

All who heard him were astonished. "Now do you believe?" thundered the King to his courtiers. "This man is the wisest in all the land."

Loaded with presents and money that would last him the rest of his life, Abdullah hurried back home, wise in the knowledge that he had also been the lucky one.





## THE TRIUMPH OF TRUTH

A rich merchant who lived in the old town of Saketpur, had a son named Sumat and a daughter named Suniti.

The merchant had been both a mother and a father to his two children for many years, because their mother had died when they were both very young.

Now the merchant became seriously ill and was dying; so he sent for his children and said sadly, "My beloved children, I hate to have to leave you, before you are settled in life, but I have no choice. Fortunately my childhood friend Lakshmigupt, who lives in the city of Sripur, has promised to take you under his wing, Sumat. He is a prosperous merchant and will teach

you all that a successful and shrewd trader should know. As for you Suniti, I have no other alternative, but to leave you in the care of your most trusted and faithful maid-servant. Your brother will visit you as often as he can and I hope that he will be able to find you a suitable husband in the not too distant future."

After the merchant died, all his affairs were settled by the family lawyer. The remaining capital was wisely invested in properties, which would increase in value, as time went by.

Sumat satisfied that his sister was well taken care of and comfortable, left Saketpur for Sripur, taking a portrait of his dear sister along with him.

Lakshmigupt and his wife



were very pleased to have Sumat live with them, as they had no children of their own.

The King of Sripur was very friendly with Lakshmigupt, who on one of his visits to the palace, took Sumat with him. There Sumat met the Crown Prince, who was the same age as himself.

The two youths took an immediate liking to one another and soon became good friends. Sumat used to go to the palace as often as he could, during his free time.

One day Sumat asked Lakshmigupt if he could invite the Crown Prince over to their house for dinner.

"By all means, son," replied Lakshmigupt.

So a few days later, after having taken permission from his parents—the King and Queen; the Crown Prince went to Lakshmigupt's house for dinner.

After dinner, Sumat took the Crown Prince up to his room to show him some of his treasured books. The Crown Prince seeing the portrait of Sumat's sister hanging on the wall said, "Friend, what a beautiful girl. Is she your sweet-heart?"

"Your Highness," replied Sumat, "she is my sister."

The Crown Prince was very relieved when he heard Sumat's

reply, because he had fallen in love with the portrait of the lovely girl.

Even after he returned to the palace, he could not forget the vision he had seen in the portrait. He was determined to meet Sumat's sister and to ask for her hand in marriage. But first of all he had to get the consent of his father, the King and his mother, the Queen.

The King and Queen refused to consent to this marriage between their son and a commoner. Many of the rulers of the neighbouring states, had daughters of marriageable age and were very keen on forming an alliance with the Kingdom of Sripur. This made the Crown Prince very unhappy. He lost his appetite and nothing interested him any more.

The King and Queen were very worried about their son and finally they sent for Lakshmigupt and Sumat.

"Prince Pratap wishes to marry Sumat's sister," said the King, "have you any objection Lakshmigupt?"

"Your Majesty," answered Lakshmigupt, "on the contrary, both Sumat and I are overwhelmed with the Prince's desire. Suniti is indeed a very



lucky girl to be sought in marriage by your son, the Crown Prince."

The King next sent for Naag, his minister and told him to make all the necessary preparations for his son's forthcoming marriage.

When Naag discovered that the bride-to-be was Sumat's sister, he was very upset. Naag already knew that Sumat had a sister, who was not only wealthy but beautiful too. And he had decided to marry her to his only brother, who was a ne'er-do-well. Now he planned to do everything that was in his



power to try and prevent this marriage.

Naag went to the King and told him that Sumat's sister was in love with him and had promised to marry him.

The King immediately summoned Lakshmigupt and Sumat and said angrily, "Why did you not tell me that Suniti has already given her love to another man?"

"She has done nothing of the sort, your Majesty," replied Sumat.

"Yes, she has fallen in love with me," declared Naag.

"No, your Majesty she has most assuredly done no such thing. I am so confident that what I say is true, that I am

willing to forfeit my life if I prove to be wrong," challenged Sumat.

"Very well, Naag," granted the King, "If you can prove that what you say is true, then Sumat shall be condemned to the gallows."

Naag set out for the town of Saketpur at once and arrived there the same evening. He soon found Suniti's house and knocked loudly on the door, until the watchman came and opened it. "I have come to see the mistress of the house," said Naag, "Her brother has sent her a letter through me."

The watchman gave Naag's message to Suniti, who replied, "Let me see the letter first and then I will decide as to whether

I will see the messenger."

So Naag handed over the forged letter to the watchman. Suniti took one look at the letter and declared, "this is not my brother Sumat's handwriting shut the front door at once, watchman!"

Naag had not expected to find that Suniti was such a shrewd girl. Now that his plan was foiled, his only other alternative was to resort to more desperate means. He managed to contact Suniti's maid-servant and gave her handful of gold coins promising her another handful, if she brought him a treasured possession belonging to Suniti. The maid-servant had never seen so much money in all her life and so Naag soon got possession of a fine ruby ring which Suniti wore almost constantly.

Triumphantly Naag returned to the King and holding up the ring for everyone to see, he declared, "Here is Suniti's love-token to me."

The King sent for his friends Lakshmigupt and Sumat and showing them the ring he asked, "Do you recognize this ring?"

"Yes, your Majesty," replied Sumat, "this ring belongs to my sister, Suniti."



"Ah!" shouted the King, "this is the ring that your sister presented to my minister, Naag, as a token of her love for him!"

"Take my life, your Majesty! It is no longer worth living, now that the honour of my family has been tarnished!" cried Sumat.

Sumat was placed in solitary confinement in a gloomy dungeon and condemned to be hanged a fortnight hence.

In the meantime Lakshmigupt went to Saketpur to see Suniti. He told her that Sumat was to be hanged in a few days' time and the reason for it.

Suniti could not believe her ears when she heard of Naag's

deceit. She put two and two together and realized that the visit of the stranger from Sripur, and the loss of her treasured ruby ring were part of the conspiracy.

Suniti went to Sripur with Lakshmigupt, to see the King and to disclose to him the deceit of his most trusted minister and to free her brother, Sumat.

"Who are you maiden?" asked the King, "and what brings you to my court?"

"Your Majesty," replied Suniti, "your trusted minister is a liar and a cheat! Because of him an innocent man has been condemned to death."

"This bold hussy is lying, your Majesty!" protested Naag, the minister, "I've never set eyes on her before!"

"Villain!" screamed Suniti, "did you not tell the King that I am in love with you and

that I gave you my ruby ring to prove it?"

"Young woman," demanded the King, "who are you?"

"I am Sumat's sister, Suniti," answered Suniti.

Naag realized that the game was up and tried to escape from the court through a secret door, which he sometimes used. But the King foiled him in his attempted escape by ordering his Royal guards to seize his minister. Next the King had Sumat set free and then he banished Naag from his kingdom for after what he had done he could never trust the man again.

The Crown Prince and Suniti were married, amidst great rejoicing, several months later.

As time went by the King and Queen grew to love Suniti very much, because she made an excellent wife and Princess.





## THE OWL AND THE CUCKOO

When grandfather came into the room, his numerous grandchildren were sitting on the carpet, excitedly turning over the pages of a large book.

"What book is that?" asked grandfather, making himself comfortable in his armchair. "You appear to find it very interesting."

"It is all about birds," said Madhu, the eldest of the children. "All the pictures are in colour, and it tells you all about each bird, where it lives and even what it eats."

This started a host of questions, with all the children clamouring together. "Why does the owl stay in its nest during the day?" "Is it true that the cuckoo lays its eggs in the crow's nest?"

"Children, children, you must not all talk at once," said grandfather with a broad smile. "If you are good, I will tell you the story of the owl and the cuckoo."

The book was quickly forgotten and all the children gathered round grandfather's chair, for no one could tell stories as well as grandfather.

Grandfather settled himself comfortably in his chair and began his story...

Many, many years ago there was a great forest, and in this forest lived a vast kingdom of every kind of bird.

Now one day, a wicked boy armed with a catapult went into the forest, intent on shooting at any bird he saw. Sitting in a nearby tree was an owl, so



C-HYRA

the boy fitted a mud pellet in the sling of his catapult and let fly. The pellet hit the owl and lodged in its stomach. The poor owl gave such a fiercesome shriek that the boy dropped his catapult and ran as if he was being chased by the devil.

The owl was in great discomfort. It could neither eat nor sleep, and its mournful hooting during the day and night, disturbed the sleep of all the other birds.

At last, a crow flew across to where the owl was perched and asked what was the matter.

"I have such a pain," moaned the owl.

"Well, that can soon be cured," said the crow, "The cuckoo is a wonderful doctor and I will fetch him."

"Alright crow," said the cuckoo. "Take us to a shallow pond and I will soon cure the owl."

Off they flew, and when they reached a pond, the cuckoo made the owl stand in the water, so that its stomach was submerged.

When the crow returned with the cuckoo, the cause of the trouble was soon discovered. But the cuckoo, who knew that the owl had a reputation for meanness, demanded payment, before starting the treatment.

At this the owl gave a terrible moan. "I am dying, and you merely talk of payment. Cure me first."

The crow joined in. "Don't worry cuckoo, I will see that you are paid."

A few minutes later the mud pellet began to soften and dissolve. After the pellet had completely dissolved, the pain went and the owl was his old self again.

When the owl had finished strutting around happy to be better, the cuckoo suggested that now the owl should pay for the treatment.

"Pay for what?" queried the owl. "All I did was stand in the water. And you demand payment for that. I have never heard of such nonsense."

The cuckoo was furious, and turned on the crow. "You promised that the owl would pay my fees."

The crow shook his head. "I was sure that the owl would pay you. If only I had any money, I would pay, but as you know, the crows are the poorest birds in the kingdom."

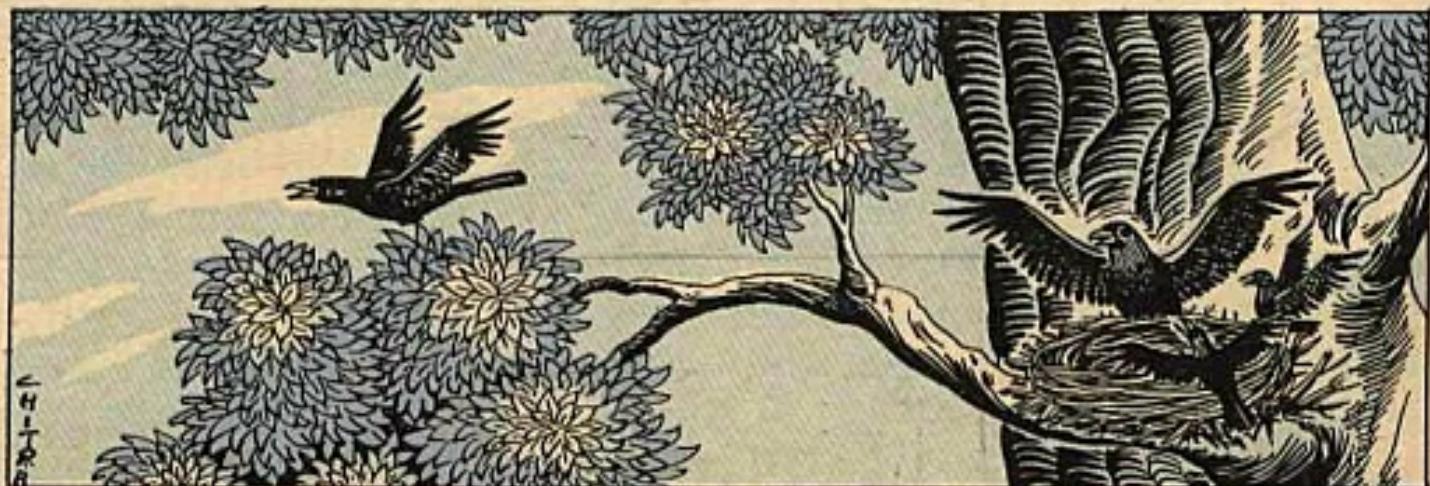
Angry at the owl's lack of gratitude, the cuckoo took his complaint to the eagle, the king of the bird kingdom.

When the case was heard, the owl swore he never promised any payment. The crow agreed that he had stood surety for the owl, but he himself was too poor to pay anything.

The eagle pronounced that this was a bad business, and he sentenced the owl to be banished from the kingdom, and that henceforth, the crow would hatch the cuckoo's eggs.

The owl, humiliated and shunned by all the other birds, stayed in his nest all day, and only went out at night time.

And the cuckoo was quite happy to know that in future it would not have to spend long hours sitting on a nest to hatch eggs.





## THE GREEDY BROTHER

A merchant was seriously ill and knew that he had no chance whatsoever of recovering from his illness. So he sent for his two sons and said, "Children, I know that I do not have much longer to live. I have put all the wealth that I possess into two tins. They are locked up in my safe. After I die, I want each of you to take one tin and I hope you will both prosper as I have done; with the money and my blessings."

Now the merchant was a shrewd man and he was aware of the fact that his eldest son was not a trustworthy person, and would think nothing of cheating his younger brother

out of his share of the money. Therefore the merchant had taken precautions to see that his younger son, would not be done out of what was rightfully his share.

The night the merchant died, his elder son took the keys and stole into the room where the safe was kept. He opened the safe and looked inside the tins to see what they contained.

In the first tin, he found the top half was filled with silver coins and the bottom half with balls of mud. And in the second tin, he found exactly the opposite—the top half was filled with balls of mud and the bottom half with silver coins.

He had no use for the balls of mud, so he put all the silver coins into one tin and all the mud balls into the other.

A couple of days later, the two brothers went into the strong-room and opened the safe, to see what their father had left. The elder brother turned to his brother and said, "Here are the two tins that father told us about. Since I am older than you, I think it is only right that I should have the first choice."

"Of course you can have the first choice," the younger brother readily agreed.

The elder brother chose the tin filled with silver coins and gave his brother the tin filled with the mud balls.

When the younger brother opened his tin and found nothing but the mud balls inside, he was very perplexed. He knew that his father had loved him dearly and that he would have left him more than just balls of mud. So he broke open one of the balls, and to his joy he found it was filled with gold coins. He broke open all the mud balls, one by one, and in each ball he found the same number of gold coins.

When the elder brother came to know of his younger brother's good fortune, he cursed himself for being so greedy and trying to cheat his brother. For in so doing he had been the loser and lost a large part of his inheritance.

**beginning in January issue —**

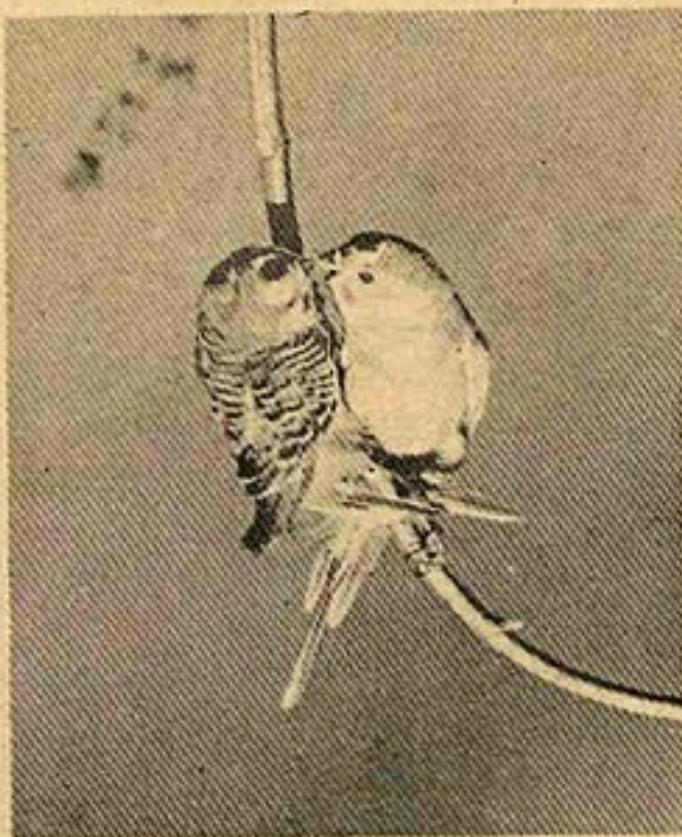
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# PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST

Here's the opportunity for you to win a prize  
Winning captions will be featured in the February issue



- ★ These two photographs are somewhat related. Can you think of suitable captions? Could be single words, or a dozen words, but the two captions should be related to each other.
- ★ Prize of Rs. 20 will be awarded to the best double caption.

- ★ Entries must be received before 31st December, otherwise they cannot be considered.
- ★ Your entry should be written on a postcard and be addressed to :  
**Photo Caption Competition,  
Chandamama Magazine,  
Madras-26.**

## Result of Photo Caption Contest in October issue

The prize is awarded to Mr. Ch. Kanth,  
351 (1) Quiros Street,  
Cochin - I

Winning entry—'Twinkling Smiles'—'Smiling Twins'



## THE GHOST THAT NEVER WAS

Sulochana was certainly the most beautiful girl in the village, but unfortunately her father did not have the money to provide her with a dowry for a suitable husband. So he decided, much to Sulochana's despair, to marry her to a village lad, named Ranga.

The thought of having to marry this Ranga, the very sight of whom she disliked, made Sulochana very unhappy, and after days and nights of brooding, she decided it was better to die than to become Ranga's wife.

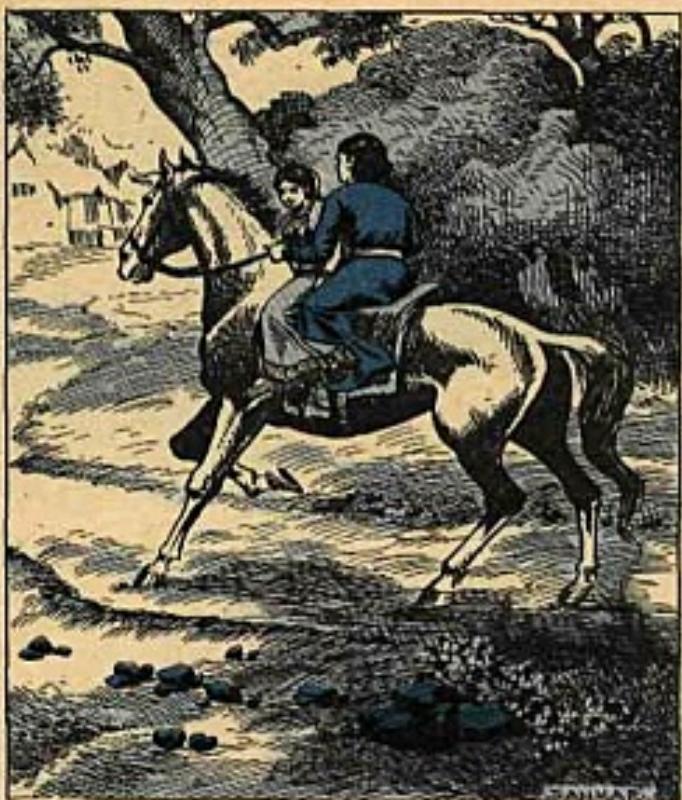
One evening, Sulochana quietly slipped out of the village and made her way across the fields to the river. She was

just about to jump into the river, when a young man riding by, realising her intention, jumped from his horse, caught Sulochana by her sari and pulled her back.

Later a tearful Sulochana blurted out her story to the young man. He was deeply moved by this beautiful girl in distress.

"Please listen to me," the young man said. "My name is Sridhar and I am a merchant of Rameswar. I beg of you to come with me this very night, and I will marry you and make you happy."

Sulochana realised that this gallant young man was offering her a new life, so she gladly



accepted his proposal and mounted on his horse. They rode through the night to his home in Rameswar.

The following day they were married, and Sulochana found that with Sridhar at her side, life offered unbounded happiness.

Meanwhile in Sulochana's village, after a fruitless search, everyone assumed that the poor girl had committed suicide in the river. Ranga, her would-be husband soon found another bride, a girl named Radha from a nearby village. But their marriage seemed to be

dogged by misfortune, as Radha always seemed to be sick and ailing.

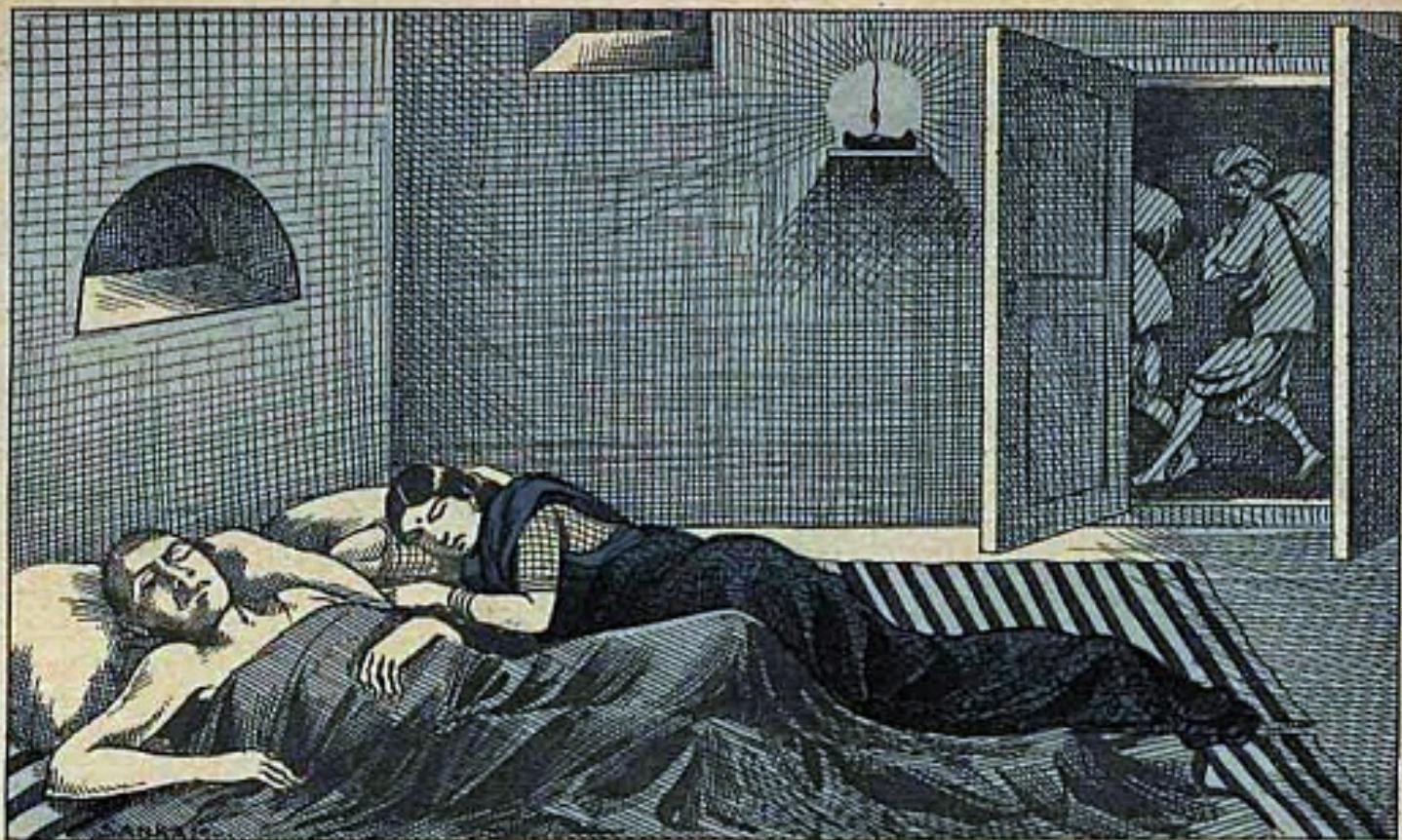
In the end, Radha went to the local witch doctor, who after a lot of hocus pocus, pronounced that Radha was possessed by the ghost of the dead Sulochana. The witch doctor pocketing his fee, told Radha to make a pilgrimage to a temple in the south, to get rid of the curse that had befallen her.

Both Radha and Ranga were upset by the witch doctor's words, and packing up their meagre possessions, set off on the pilgrimage.

That same night they arrived at Rameswar, and managed to find shelter in a somewhat derelict cottage. During the night, whilst Ranga and Radha slept, thieves broke in and departed with all the couple's possessions.

The following morning, stranded and miserable, Ranga and Radha were advised to go to the house of Sridhar, the merchant, who always helped those in distress.

When they called at Sridhar's house, they were greeted by Sulochana, who recognized Ranga at once. But he never realised that this lovely



bejewelled woman was Sulochana from his village.

After Ranga and his wife had bathed and eaten, Ranga started to tell his story of their misfortunes, but Sulochana interrupted him saying, "You are Ranga." "And once you were pledged to marry a girl named Sulochana."

"How do you know?" queried Ranga, greatly bewildered. "What you say is true, but this Sulochana committed suicide, and now my poor wife is possessed by Sulochana's ghost."

"You are wrong," Sulochana said, "Sulochana is not dead. She was rescued by a young

man, who married her. I know, because I am Sulochana, and I am certainly not a ghost."

Ranga was so amazed he could hardly speak. "Now I do recognize you" he stammered, "of course you are Sulochana, and all this time we have been worrying about you being a ghost, and the words of that fake witch doctor."

No longer worried about the ghost, Radha soon got better, and Sulochana and her husband were more than generous in making good all that had been stolen. So Ranga and Radha set off for home, full of praises for the ghost that never was.



# SEVEN SIMEONS

Long ago in the land of Russia there lived an old peasant called Simeon, and his wife. They had always dearly longed to have children; one day the peasant's wife presented him with seven sons.

The poor man was so overwhelmed at having such a large family all at once that he did not know what to call them; then he gave them all the name of Simeon, too.

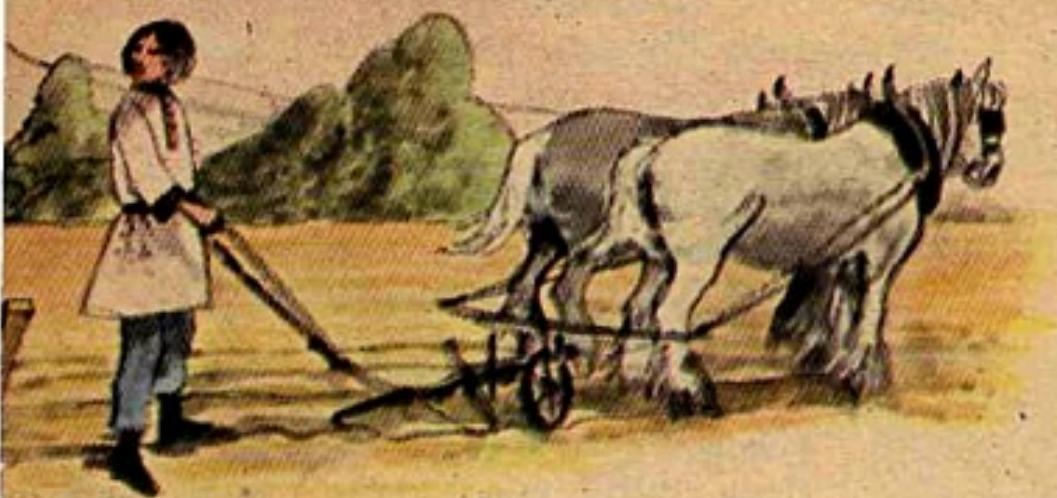
Many years passed and the old couple died, but the seven

boys grew up into fine young men. They stayed together on the little farm and it prospered.

One day while they were working in the fields the Czar of the land came riding up, accompanied by his courtiers. Seeing the seven men working so hard he called to them.

"What is your name?" he asked the first lad.

"Simeon Simeonovich, your Imperial Highness," the lad replied. "And these are my brothers."



The Czar stopped to speak to the seven sons

"What is your name?" the Czar asked of the next brother.

"Simeon Simeonovich," was the reply.

"And your name?" the Czar asked the third and the fourth and the fifth brother.

The Czar was most surprised to learn that all seven brothers had the same name.

"You must come with me to my palace," said the Czar. "I have need of fine lads like yourselves in my service."

There and then all seven Simeons left their farm and went with the Czar to his palace.

"We must find a trade for you," said the Czar. "Farming is all very well, but you must have other trades."

"If it please, your royal highness," replied the first Simeon. "We already have other trades. I will build you an iron

tower that will reach to the heavens."

The second Simeon stepped forward.

"When my brother has built the tower I will stand on top of it and let you know what is happening in all the surrounding countries."

The third Simeon bowed to the Czar and said:

"I will forge an axe and cut a tree in the Imperial forest and fashion it into a ship."

"I will command that ship," said the fourth Simeon.

The Czar turned to the fifth brother.

"What of you, Simeon?" he asked.

"I will fashion a gun, the like of which has never been seen before," replied the lad. "With this gun I will be able to shoot any bird that flies."

The sixth brother Simeon

said: "I am the fastest runner in your kingdom, and I will retrieve any bird that my brother shoots before it can touch the ground."

The seventh, and last Simeon then spoke:



"I need neither art nor craft, your Imperial Majesty. I have a valuable skill. I am a thief."

"A thief," cried the Czar. "I banish all thieves from my kingdom."

"I am no ordinary thief," replied the lad.

"Then you must prove that you are as you claim," said the Czar. "For many years I have sought the hand of the fair Princess Helena, who lives in a far land. If you can steal the princess and bring her to me for my wife, then you are indeed no ordinary thief."

"I go at once, your Imperial Majesty. I only ask that my brothers should help me."

The mighty Czar gave his consent and the seven Simeons began their task.

The first Simeon began to build his tower, and when it was halfway to the sky, the second Simeon climbed it and at once spied the beautiful Princess Helena. He reported to the Czar.

"The fair lady lives nine and twenty countries from here. She sits at the window of a tall palace."

"Bring her to me," the Czar commanded.

The third Simeon made an

axe and chopped down a tree and fashioned a sturdy ship which the fourth Simeon would command. The fifth brother forged a gun and the seventh made friends with a stray black cat which he found wandering in the palace courtyard.

When the ship was ready, the seven brothers set sail for the land where the Princess Helena lived; after many days they came to the strange shore.

When they had cast anchor, the seventh Simeon, the thief, went ashore with his black cat to spy out the land.

Princess Helena, at the window of her palace, spied the thief, and not having seen a cat before thought it to be some strange dog. She sent a servant at once to the thief to ask what kind of dog he had with him, and would he sell the strange animal.

The thief said he could not sell his cat at any price, but he would gladly take the cat to the princess so that she may hold and stroke him.

Princess Helena was so taken by the black cat that she bade the thief enter the palace.

"It is not a dog, your highness," said the thief when he was brought before the princess.



**The princess sent a servant to speak to the thief.**

"It is a cat; they are quite common in the land I come from."

"How beautiful it is," said the princess as she stroked its silken fur.

"I will bring him to you every day so that you may play," said the thief.

The princess grew to love the black cat, and for seven days, the thief took the cat to the palace. On the seventh day, while the princess played with the cat, the brother Simeon said:



**The fifth brother shot the white swan.**

"I have journeyed here in a beautiful wooden ship loaded with treasures that would overshadow any that the princess has ever seen."

The princess was at once curious and wanted to visit the thief's ship.

She gathered her court and all her attendants with her and they went down to where the ship was anchored.

"None but you may look upon the treasure," said the thief to the princess, so Helena bid her courtiers to wait on the

shore while she went aboard the ship with the thief. They went below the decks, and at once, the other six brothers Simeon leapt from their hiding places and set the sails.

When the princess felt the ship move, she ran back on deck, and saw the shore of her land falling far behind.

"You have tricked me," she cried.

She then changed herself into a beautiful white swan and flew high about the masts of the ship before any of the

brothers could stop her.

At once the fifth brother Simeon brought out his wonderful gun and shot the swan with its magic bullet.

The swan fell back towards the deck of the ship. The sixth brother darted forward and caught the bird before it touched the ground.

At once the swan turned back into the fair Princess Helena.

Meanwhile, the princess's soldiers had set out in a fleet of ships to pursue the brothers' ship. As they approached, the fourth Simeon grasped the ship

and dragged it down beneath the waters.

Thinking that the ship had sunk, the princess's fleet turned back to the shore, certain that all had drowned.

When darkness fell the brothers' ship rose from the water and set sail back to the land of the Czar.

As soon as the Princess Helena met the Czar she fell in love with him and they were married at once.

The seven Simeons were made dukes by the grateful Czar and for the rest of their days they lived in riches and honour.



**When the princess went below deck they set sail at once.**



## A FOOLISH FIGHT

One hot summer's day, a ferocious lion and a wild boar happened to visit the same water-hole. They were very thirsty and wanted to quench their thirst with the lovely cool water.

On seeing each other they both became mad with rage. "Wait, until I have had my drink of water," growled the lion.

"Certainly not!" grunted the boar loudly.

"Then fight for your life," roared the lion.

With this they rushed headlong at each other and fought

with all their might and strength. Soon they were both badly mauled and bleeding profusely. But still neither of them would give in.

Seemingly from nowhere a flock of vultures arrived on the scene. They perched on the branches of the trees overhead and waited patiently for the two beasts to kill one another. Then they would have a fine meal of wild boar and lion's flesh.

The lion suddenly became aware of the presence of the vultures and signalled to the

wild boar to stop fighting, showing him the hungry-looking vultures looking down upon them.

"Let us stop our fighting and be friends," the lion said to the boar. "Otherwise one or may be both of us will become a meal for those loathsome birds."

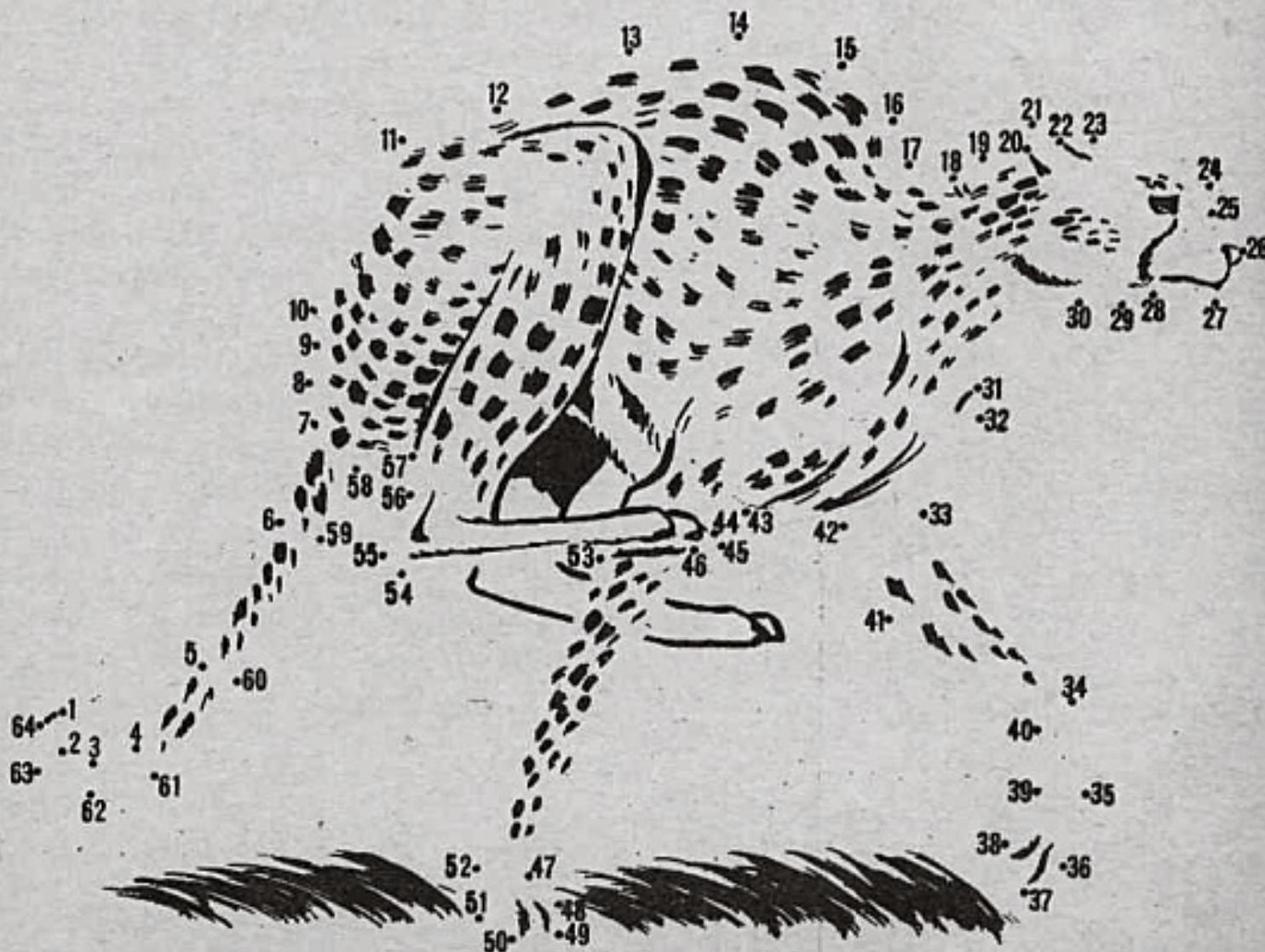
"Agreed," replied the boar.

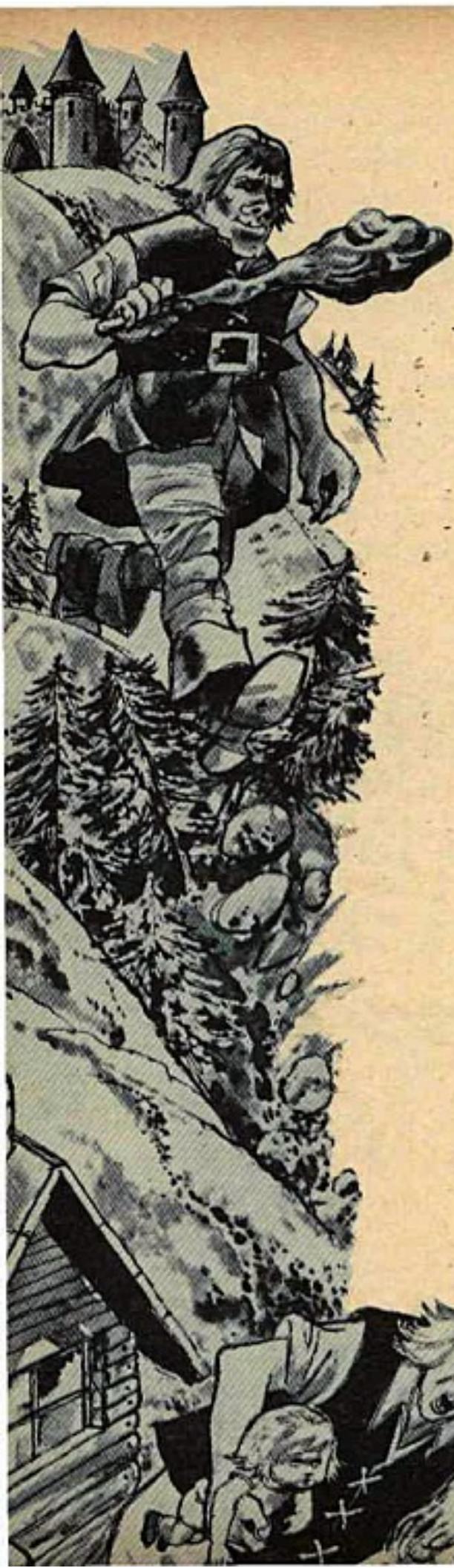
Then both the lion and the wild boar slowly dragged themselves to the water's edge and side by side they drank their fill of water.

After that both of them painfully went their different ways.

As for the vultures—they were done out of a fine, tasty dinner!

Join up the dots Nos. 1—64 to finish this picture of a swift moving animal.





# THE MILLER

Once there lived a poor miller who had seven children. Although he worked hard everyday grinding wheat into flour and grew as many vegetables as he could in his tiny patch of garden, they still had barely enough to eat.

To make matters worse, a great ogre lived in the castle on top of the hill. He demanded rent from the miller for his mill, several sacks of flour each year.

One year, the crops were very bad. There was hardly any money or food to spare and the miller's seven children often went hungry. The miller's wife used all the milk from their one cow to make butter, which she took to the market and sold for a few pence.



# AND THE OGRE

Hard as they worked, they could not save enough money or flour to pay the ogre and they waited for his yearly visit in fear and trembling. The miller set his seven children to watch the castle in turn and warn him of the ogre's approach. One evening, just as they had finished supper, the eldest boy called out that the ogre was on his way.

The miller looked out of his window and saw the ogre, club in hand, striding down the hill towards them. Quickly he bundled his wife and all his children into the barn and hid them all under the straw and chaff. When not even a hair was to be seen, the miller crawled under the chaff, too, so that when the ogre arrived he found the mill deserted.

Hard as he banged and loud as he shouted, he could get no reply and at last, in a great rage, he set off back up the hill swearing to return and have his vengeance on the miller.

On the way he passed the miller's old cow and in his fury he lifted his club and gave it such a blow between the horns that it fell down dead.

When all was quiet, the miller and his family crawled out from under the chaff, pleased to have escaped the ogre, but when they saw their poor old cow lying dead in the field they were very upset. "Well, it can't be helped," said the miller. "We shall just have to take the skin to market and hope we can sell it for a few pence. At least the meat will make us a fine stew for a few days."

They skinned the old cow and the miller set off for the market. His way led through a dark wood and as he went he heard several men approaching. Fearing robbers, he climbed into a tree with his cow-skin, to hide until they had gone past.

However, the robbers stopped under his tree and threw down the sacks which they carried.

They were full of gold which the robbers settled down to count. The miller was so scared that he began to tremble. This made the branches shake and the leaves rustle and the robbers called out, "Who is there?"

It gave the miller such a fright that he let go the cow-skin and with horns, hooves and tail flying, it fell on to the robbers. They, thinking it was the devil come to get them, left their gold and fled.

After a time, the miller plucked up the courage to come down from the tree. He laid the sacks of gold on the cow-skin and dragged them back home.

His family was delighted and his wife said, "if only we had a bushel measure, we could weigh the gold and see how much is here."

The miller smiled. "I will go and borrow one from the ogre," he said and set off.

The ogre could hardly believe his ears when the miller said he wanted a bushel measure to weigh his gold. He was even more amazed when the miller explained that he had got it by taking their cow-skin to market. He could hardly wait

to kill his herd of forty fine cows and send his servant to market with their skins.

When the servant said he wanted four sacks of gold for each skin, everyone laughed at him and he returned home with only a few shillings.

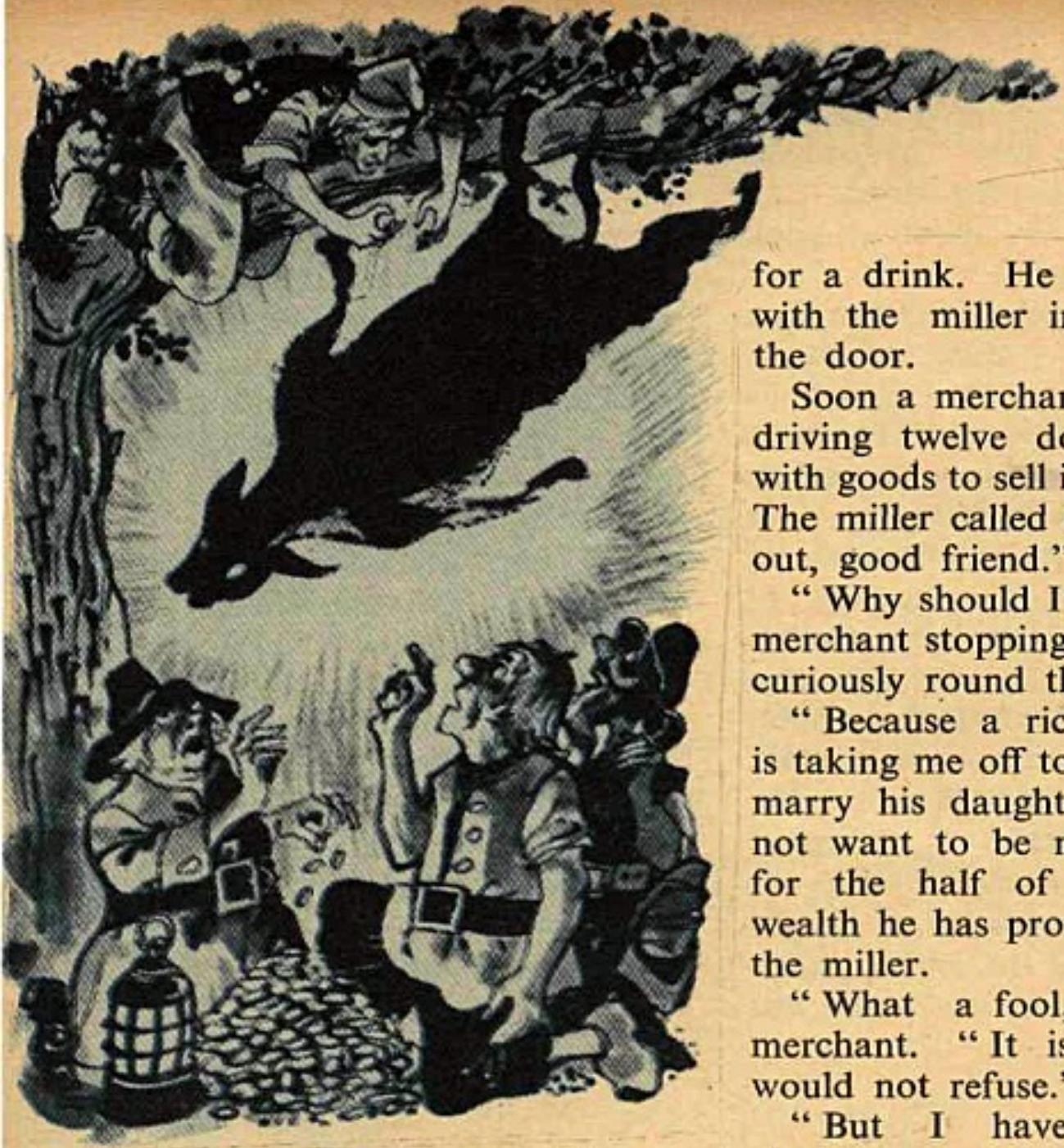
In a towering rage, the ogre set off down the hill to the miller's house.

The miller, who had been expecting this, called to his wife to help him carry the stew-pot from the fire into the garden. Then he started to whip the pot with a large whip. The pot, which had just been taken off the hot fire, continued to bubble merrily.

The ogre watched in amazement and the miller explained that it was a magic pot. When whipped hard enough it began to boil. So pleased was the ogre that he picked up the pot and, ignoring the miller's cries, carried it back to his castle, but hard as he whipped, he could not make it boil.

In a great fury, he took a large sack and went back down the hill. This time he took the miller by surprise, picked him up, dropped him into the sack and set out for the river.

"This time I have you, my



The cow-skin fell on  
the startled robbers

fine friend," he said. "You have tricked me once too often. I shall take you to the nearest river and drop you in and then we shall see how your tricks will help you."

The day was hot, so on the way the ogre stopped at an inn

for a drink. He left the sack with the miller in it, out-side the door.

Soon a merchant came past, driving twelve donkeys laden with goods to sell in the market. The miller called out, "Let me out, good friend."

"Why should I?" asked the merchant stopping and walking curiously round the sack.

"Because a rich noble-man is taking me off to his castle to marry his daughter and I do not want to be married, even for the half of her father's wealth he has promised," cried the miller.

"What a fool," said the merchant. "It is an offer I would not refuse."

"But I have one wife already," said the miller. "She is more trouble than I can deal with. Why not change places with me if you are so keen to be married. The nobleman will not care as long as he has a husband for his daughter."

The merchant agreed, let the miller out of the sack and climbed in himself. "Take

good care of my wares and see that none are lost," he said, as the miller retied the string. "I shall return for them as soon as I am married."

The miller promised and then he picked up a stick and drove the donkeys to the market as fast as he could. The ogre came out of the inn, picked up the sack, carried it to the river and threw it in, pleased to think that that was the last of the miller. However, on his way through the market who should he see but the miller, selling fine wares from a stall.

"You should be at the bottom of the river, where I put you," roared the ogre.

"But look what I found there," replied the miller, pointing to his wares. "I could not

leave them all there."

"Tell me," said the ogre in a softer voice, "did you bring them all or are there more left?"

"Oh, there is much more at the bottom of the river, but this was all I could bring," replied the miller. "Real gold and silver some of the other things were. Far too rich for a poor man like me."

The ogre did not wait to hear more. He rushed back to the river and leaped right into the middle, but as he could not swim, he could not get to the bank again and the strong current carried him away so that he was never seen again.

The miller went happily back to his home and family, to live a life of comfort with the robbers' gold.





## The Miserly Millionaire

This story is about a millionaire who lived in a village. He was well known for his miserliness. When any of the villagers approached him for a loan or asked for charity; the millionaire would question them in surprise, saying, "Where do you come from, good man?"

"I live in this village," the man would reply.

"Impossible!" the millionaire would exclaim, "there is not a living soul in this village, who does not know that I am the greatest miser living on this earth! How is it that you do

not know what is common knowledge?"

A shoe-maker also lived in the same village and he was known for his generosity and his willingness to help a person, in genuine need of money.

One day the millionaire became seriously ill and died a few days later. He was buried without ceremony in a shallow grave, which was dug beside the road. And because the grave was so shallow, the jackals soon found his body and dug it up.

As usual the needy people of the village continued to go to the shoe-maker for alms. But

the shoe-maker no longer gave them any assistance, instead he would send them away saying, "What has a poor man like me got to give to you. Go away good people and never come to me for anything, anymore."

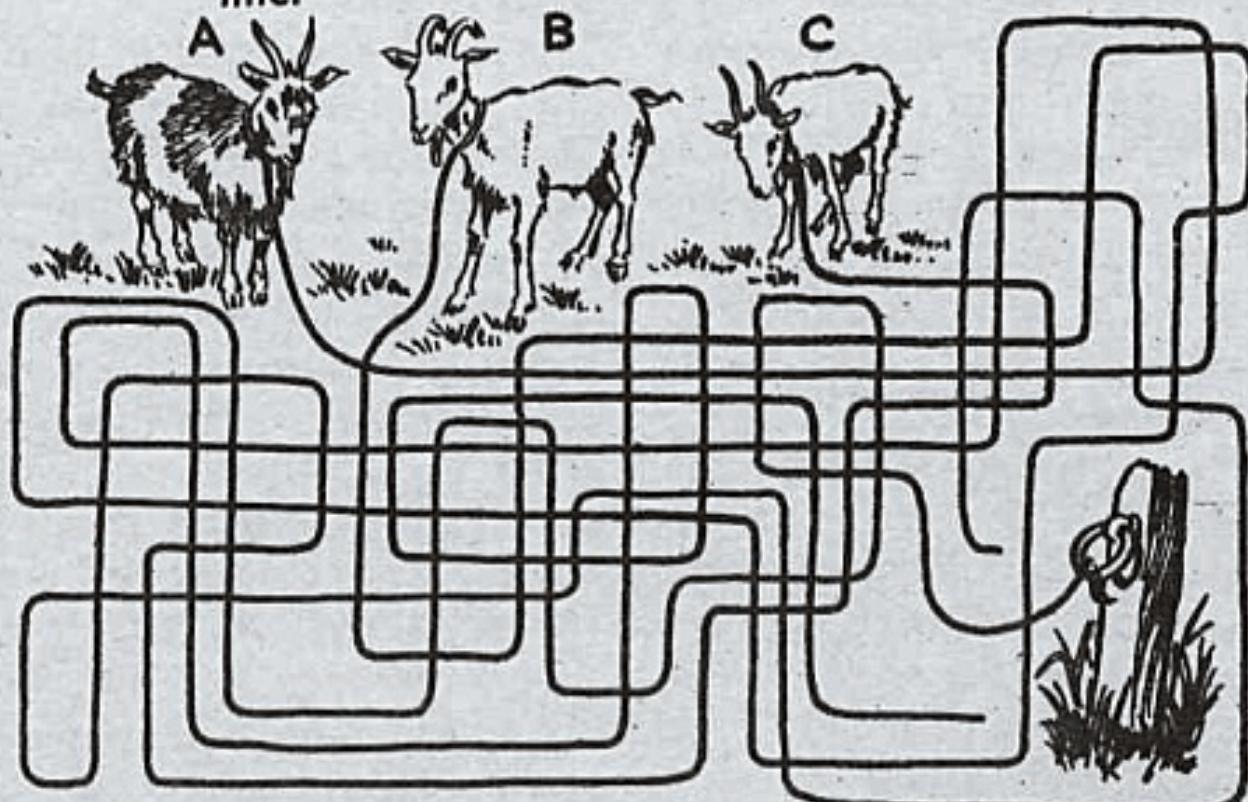
The head of the village on hearing of this, sent for the shoe-maker and asked, "Good man, you have earned the reputation of being a great giver of alms. Now how is it that you have suddenly stopped helping people in need?"

"Sir," replied the shoe-

maker, "the millionaire, who has just died, used to give me the funds, to distribute to all the poor and needy people of our village. He made me promise never to tell anyone of this deed of his. And now that he is dead, charity in this village has become like a well that has suddenly gone dry."

When the villagers found out that the millionaire had been their benefactor for so many years; they felt very ashamed of the mean and disrespectful way in which they had treated him when he died.

One of these three goats is tied to the post. See if you can spot which one, before tracing down each line.



# THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHAUSEN

Hello, Chandamama readers. This month I am going to tell you about some more of my wonderful adventures, which start with the sad story of my being captured by the Turks.

You will remember that I had a gallant and clever horse, by the name of Emperor. His speed

and readiness and my own courage carried us safely through almost the whole of the war, but luck was against us when we had the misfortune to be surrounded by more of the enemy than we could deal with. It was a sad blow to my pride when I was captured and taken to Turkey as a prisoner of war.

It was the custom in those days for prisoners to be sold as slaves to anybody who would buy them. I did not like the sound of this, but was lucky enough to be bought by the Sultan of Turkey himself, who was in need of a bee-minder at the time.

I quickly found out that the job of being the Sultan's bee-minder was not all that hard. It really consisted of being quick at arithmetic. Every morning I had to drive the Sultan's bees to the fields filled with clover, attend to them all day long and drive them back to their hives at night, taking great care to count them and not let one be lost.



One evening I missed a bee. It was a terrible shock. I quickly counted them all again, but it was quite true. One was missing. I had lost it.

"If the Sultan gets to know of this I shall be in terrible trouble," I thought. "It must be found without delay."

Hurrying back towards the field of clover, I saw two brown bears coming towards me. They seemed to be on the trail of something and I quickly saw that it was the missing bee.

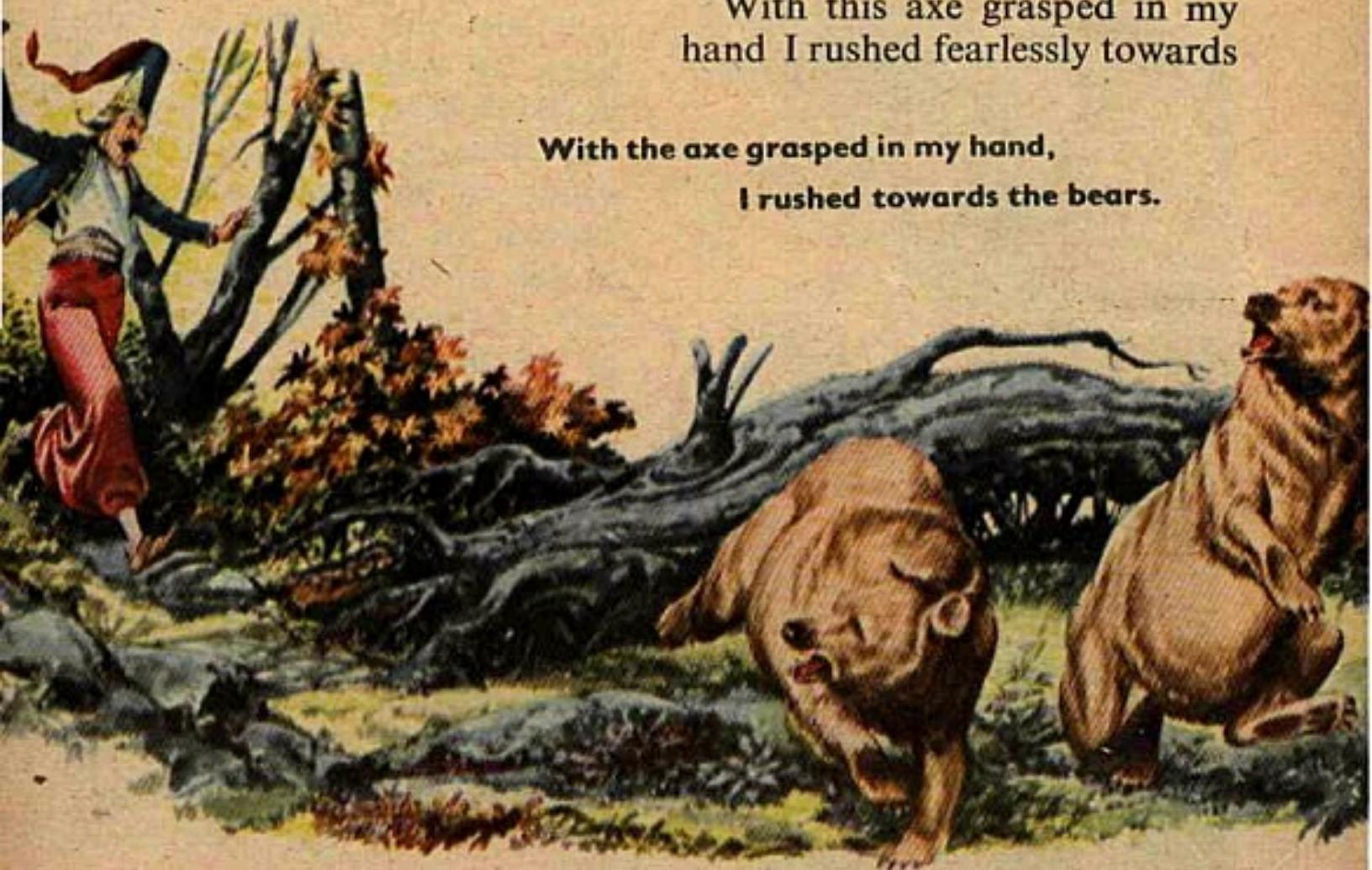
It had damaged one of its wings and was flying a little way, then resting, then flying a little way farther, and the cunning bears were following it.

"The rascals! They are hoping that the bee will lead them back to the hives, so that they can steal the Sultan's honey," I said to myself.

Let me tell you that those bears were big and fierce—and I had no weapon except a silver-bladed axe, which was carried by all the Sultan's gardeners as a sort of badge.

With this axe grasped in my hand I rushed fearlessly towards

**With the axe grasped in my hand,  
I rushed towards the bears.**



the bears and threw it at them, with the hope of frightening them away. But it missed, struck a hard piece of rock in the ground and bounced straight up into the air.

The axe went up and up and up and went on rising until it reached the moon, upon which it landed.

The bears ran away, the bee flew back to the hives, and I was left staring up at the moon.

"How can I recover that axe? How can I fetch it down again?" I gasped.

Then I thought of something. There is a kind of bean grown in Turkey which grows very quickly indeed. I planted one at once. It grew as if by magic, sending up a long stalk, which actually fastened itself on a piece of the moon.

I had no more to do now but to climb up the beanstalk and I safely arrived on the moon without much trouble.

My only worry was that in a place where everything has the brightness of silver, I could not at first find the silver-bladed axe, but at length I discovered it lying in a heap of straw.

It was now time to return but, alas, the heat of the sun had dried up my beanstalk and



withered it away to almost nothing. I could not possibly climb down it again and it appeared that I was stuck on the moon forever, until I had an idea.

I got to work and twisted a rope of dried straw, making it as long as I could.

Tying one end of it to the moon, I then lowered myself down to the end of it.

**I then set about climbing out of the deep hole in the earth.**

Dangling in space, I held tightly to the straw rope with my left hand. With the axe in my right hand, I then reached up and cut off the upper part of the rope.

It may sound a little difficult to explain, but as I wanted to get down and not up, the top part of the rope was quite useless to me, until I cleverly tied it to the bottom part and so gave myself some more rope to slide down.



This brought me a good deal lower, as you might well imagine, so I again cut off the top part of the rope and tied it to the lower end.

I had to do this many, many times, cutting and joining the rope and then sliding farther down it. Little by little I got nearer to the earth and was happily proceeding with the cutting and tying when a shocking thing happened.

Through cutting and tying so often I had weakened the straw rope and was four or five miles from the earth when it suddenly broke.

I fell to the ground with such speed and violence that I made a hole about sixty feet deep and felt somewhat stunned when

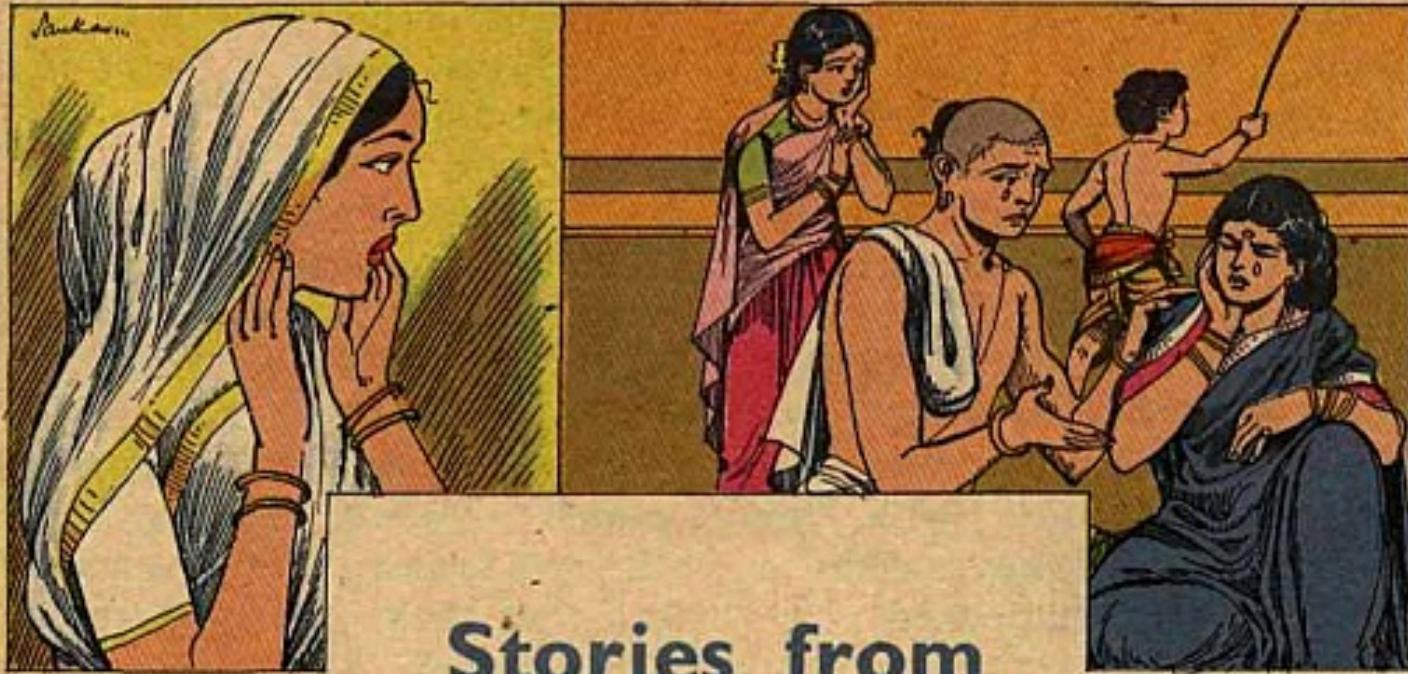
I stopped at the bottom of it. Looking up I saw a patch of daylight high above.

"At least I have reached the earth, although much nearer to the middle of it than I expected," I murmured to myself, and then I set about climbing out.

All was well that ended well. When I got back to the Sultan's garden I found all the bees safe and sound. The bears had gone, so there was nothing to worry about.

What was even happier, however, was to be told that peace had been signed between the Russians and the Turks, and shortly afterwards I was sent back with several other prisoners of war. Soon after I took my leave of Russia—but that is another story.

*The Editor and Staff of  
English Chandamama wish all  
readers a very Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New year*



## Stories from

# MAHABHARATA

### *The Story so far:*

*The mutual jealousies between the Kaurava and the Pandava princes increased from day to day, and Duryodhana, the eldest of the Kaurava princes, was the ring-leader of a dastardly plot to kill the sons of Pandu.*

*The sons of Pandu, with their mother Kunti, were induced to pay a visit to the distant town of Varanasi. A house had been built there for their residence, constructed of inflammable materials. Thanks to the warning of Vidura, the King's counsellor, the five brothers and their mother escaped the fiery conflagration*

*through a subterranean passage and took refuge in the forests.*

*Whilst they were in the forests, Bhima meets Hidambi, the sister of a man-eating giant, Rakshasa who promises to help them escape from her brother, but first entreats Bhima to marry her.*

### *Bhima and the Rakshasas.*

Bhima was completely smitten by the beauty of Hidambi but the proposal of marriage certainly startled him. Before he could reply, there was a terrific noise in the forest, as though a wild elephant was on the rampage.



### Kunti meets Hidambi

"It is my brother," Hidambi cried in anguish. "Go quickly otherwise he will surely kill you and your family."

Bhima just laughed. "I am not scared of any giant, however big he be."

As he spoke, the giant came out of the forest, a fiendish brute, snarling like a wild animal. Bhima wasted no time, in running to intercept the giant, and they were soon locked in deadly combat.

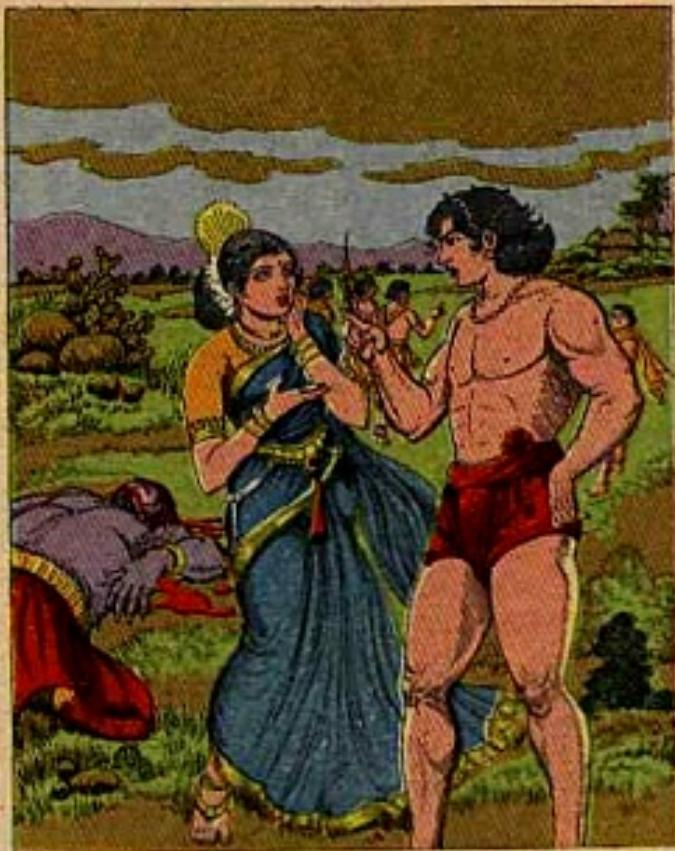
Each pulled up young trees for clubs, and although the giant towered over Bhima, he was not so agile, and Bhima

soon had the giant bruised and bleeding in a dozen places.

But the noise they made awakened his mother and brothers.

The princes ran to the scene of the fight, ready to assist Bhima, but it was soon obvious that the giant was no match for Bhima's agility and strength. The ponderous giant tried and tried to deal Bhima a killing blow with his club, but Bhima would nimbly dodge aside, then dash in and club the giant unmercifully.

Meanwhile Kunti was puzzled at the sight of Hidambi. "You



### Bhima and Hidambi

must be a goddess of the forest with such rare beauty. But tell me, who are you and why are you here?"

"Good mother," replied Hidambi, "I am no goddess. I live in this forest with my brother who is now trying to kill your son. Believe me, I wished you no harm, and I wanted to save you from my fearsome brother."

"Have no fear my child. Bhima is a great warrior," Kunti said, and just at that moment there was a mighty roar from the princes, as Bhima struck the giant a tremendous

bow on the head, which stretched him lifeless on the ground.

When everyone had finished congratulating Bhima on his victory, Yudhishtira implored them; "Let us not tarry here for Duryodhana's men may be searching the forest. We must travel far before we are safe."

At this, Hidambi threw herself at Kunti's feet. "Please do not leave me. I have fallen in love with your son Bhima, and if he will not marry me, I will kill myself."

Yudhishtira lifted Hidambi to her feet. "Come with us for my brother will marry you."

And so the Pandavas, with Hidambi, journeyed through the forest. Bhima married Hidambi, and they lived together for a year, and during that time Hidambi had a son, who was named Ghatotkacha, because the child did not have a single hair on his head.

Soon after Ghatotkacha was born, Hidambi told Bhima. "I must leave you. When my son has grown to manhood, he will serve you when you need him."

And so Hidambi took leave of the Pandavas and returned to the forests with her son.

The Pandavas then decided to move further on, and in

their journey suffered many hardships and overcame many dangers.

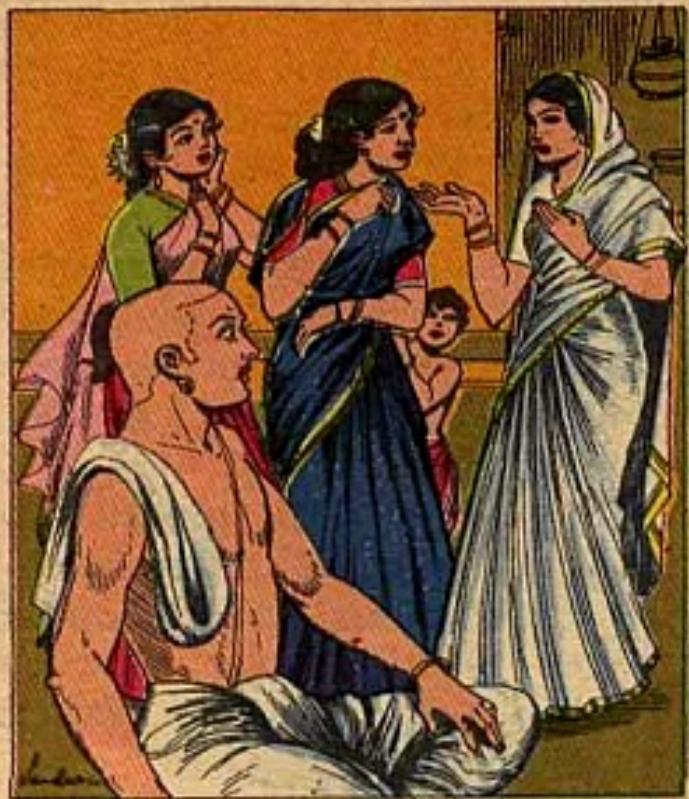
They met Vedavyas on the way, from whom they received encouragement and wise counsel. He advised them to put on the garb of brahmans, and go to the city of Ekachakra and there live in a certain brahman's house, till better days dawned.

In the city of Ekachakra, the Pandavas stayed in the guise of brahmans, begging for their food in the streets.

One day, when the other brothers had gone to beg for alms, Bhima stayed with his mother, and they heard a loud wailing from the house of their brahman landlord. Thinking some calamity had befallen the family, Kunti went inside the house to find out what was amiss.

The brahman and his wife could hardly speak for weeping, but in the end Kunti gathered that it had been decreed that one of the family had to be sacrificed to a Rakshasa who lived in a cave on a nearby hill.

This Rakshasa dominated the people of the city. The King was weak and unable to protect his people, and those who had



Kunti consoles the brahman family

tried to wreak vengeance on the Rakshasa were killed.

The Rakshasa had been in the habit of indiscriminately killing and eating men, women and children. Then the citizens begged the Rakshasa to stop this wholesale killing, and it was agreed that once a week someone would drive a bullock cart laden with food to the Rakshasa's cave, and the Rakshasa would make a feast of the food, the bullocks and the driver. This week it was the turn of the landlord's family to go to the Rakshasa.

The brahman's wife implored that she should be allowed and go to be sacrificed, but the husband said it was his duty to go.

At this their daughter, who was but eighteen, begged her parents to send her, as the home could not exist without a mother or a father.

The small son, picked up a piece of firewood and brandishing it above his head, shouted in his childish voice that he would go and kill the wicked Rakshasa.

Kunti now intervened. "Good people, do not despair. I have five sons, and one of

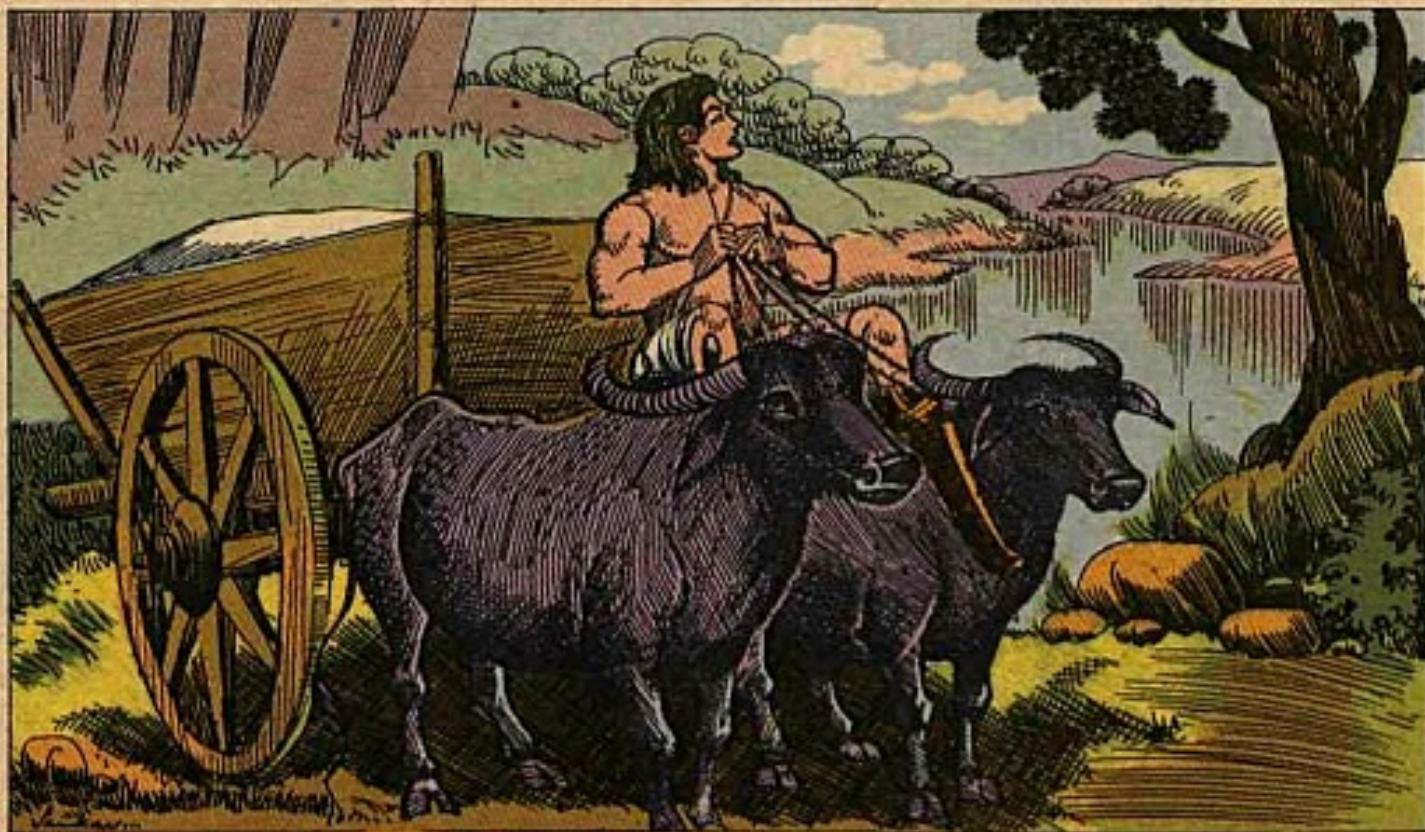
them will take the food to the Rakshasa."

The brahman shook his head sadly and said that he could never allow anyone to sacrifice their life for his family.

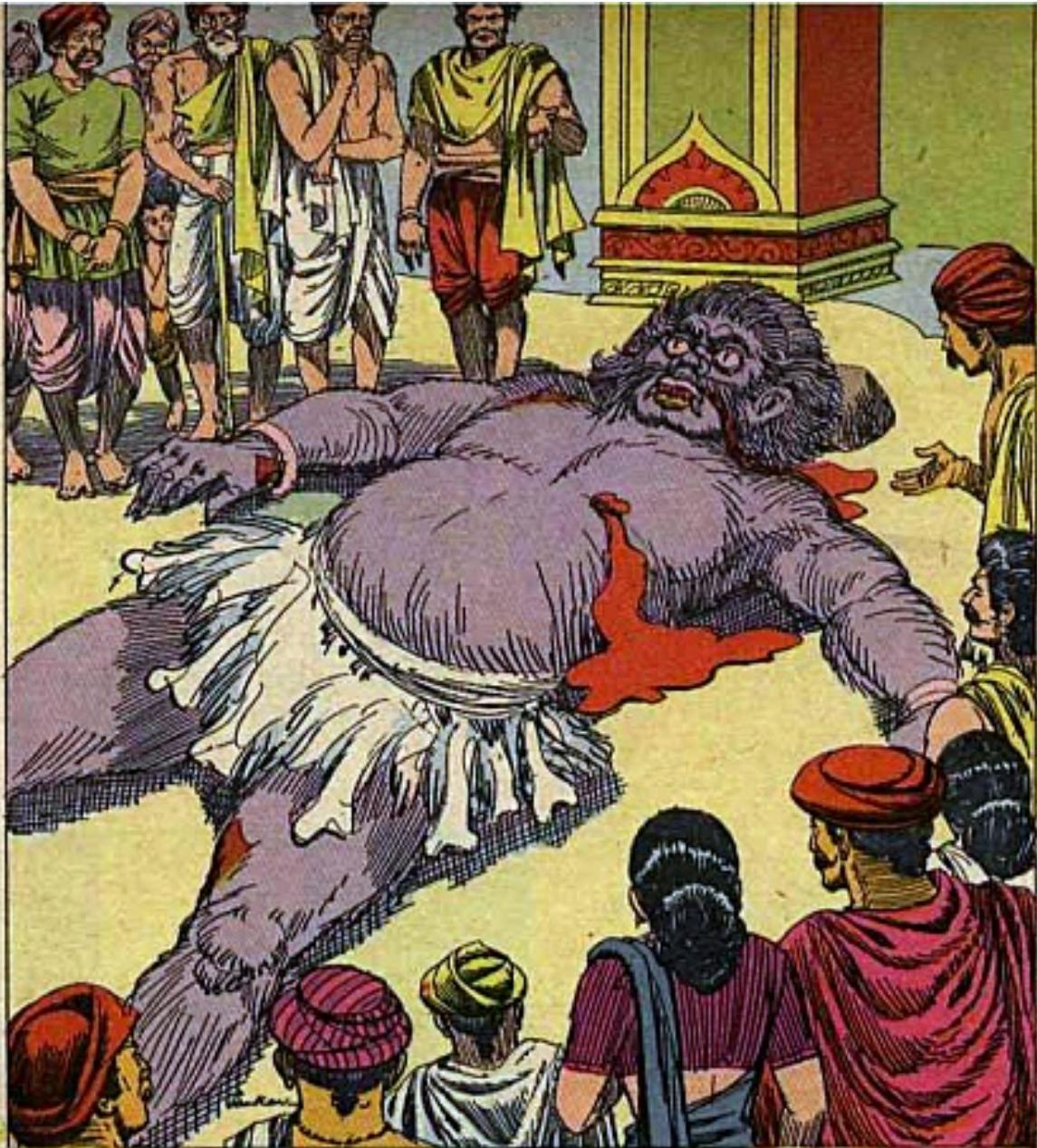
"Have no fear," said Kunti proudly. "My son Bhima has superhuman strength and will certainly kill this Rakshasa."

When Kunti told Bhima the whole story, he was full of enthusiasm at the thought of fighting another Rakshasa.

The next morning the bullock cart was laden with foodstuffs, and Bhima set off in high spirits, promising to return long before sunset.



Bhima goes to the rakshasa's cave



When Bhima reached the Rakshasa's cave, he decided he was hungry, and began to eat the food in the cart. This maddened the Rakshasa, who rushed out of his cave at Bhima, but Bhima evaded the clutching arms, and quite unconcerned, continued to eat the food.

At this the Rakshasa uprooted a tree and threw it at Bhima, who merely brushed it aside.

Bhima then strode up to the Rakshasa and a great fight ensued. But Bhima was by far the stronger, and in the end, he threw the Rakshasa down, and broke his back.

Bhima dragged the carcass of the Rakshasa to the gates of the city, and the people wept with joy that the awful menace hovering over their heads had been removed at last.

# WHAT ARE THESE FLAGS?



It is the national flag of Canada, and bears a maple leaf, emblem of the great British Dominion. Until 1965, Canada flew the Blue Ensign on which was a shield bearing the arms of England, Scotland and Ireland, and also the fleur-de-lis, to show the country's long links with France. Below these arms was an emblem of maple leaves.

This is the national flag of Belgium. Its three vertical stripes of black, yellow and red are the three national colours. This flag was first used by the people of Brabant when they revolted against the Austrians in 1787. In 1830 when Belgium became independent this flag was chosen to represent Belgium.



This is the flag of Uruguay, in South America. At first, the flag had nine blue stripes, but by a law passed in 1830, the number of blue stripes was reduced to four. These, with the five white stripes, make one for each of the nine political divisions forming the Republic of Uruguay. The sun has sixteen rays, with alternate straight and wavy points.



## LIFE IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN WEALTH

Varun scratched his head in bewilderment, for it seemed not matter how hard he worked, there was never sufficient money to be able to save some for his old age. Admittedly wood carvings did not fetch high prices, especially as every customer haggled until he was forced to let his precious carvings go cheaply.

His wife kept on telling him not to worry, for they had a good home, sufficient food and ample clothing. Have faith, she would say, and one day things would improve.

Late one afternoon, a stranger came into Varun's workshop, and after discussing various

carvings, Varun was surprised to discover that the stranger was a wellknown palmist.

Varun thought it a good idea to invest a few rupees, to find out exactly what the future had in store. After a lot of deliberation, the palmist said he could see a bright future in Varun's palm; his business would improve and before he died, he would be worth more than a lakh of rupees.

Varun scoffed at such a prediction and said it was all nonsense, but his wife was sure the palmist could read into the future. She was certainly right, because before long busi-



**The guard turned the sculptor out.**

ness improved. There seemed to be a sudden demand for wood carvings, and each month they were able to save a little.

Some years later, Varun met a sculptor who had come from far away in hope of selling the king some of his fine work.

"But I am afraid my luck is out," said the sculptor with a woebegone look. "I went to the palace but the guards turned me away. Probably because I look like a beggar."

"Let me show you my prize statue," continued the sculptor, and he took Varun to the house where he was staying, and in

his room was the most beautiful statue that Varun had ever seen.

"It is wonderful," said Varun excitedly. "Let me take it to the palace and I am sure the king will want to buy it."

"If you are successful, I will willingly give you half whatever the king pays," the sculptor said.

Next morning Varun went to the palace with the small statue wrapped in a silk cloth, and had no difficulty in obtaining audience with the king.

"Your Majesty," said Varun, "I have brought a



**The king fell in love with the Statue.**

statue by a great sculptor, which I am sure you will like."

When the statue was uncovered, the king was amazed at such a fine work of art, and ordered his treasurer to go immediately and pay the sculptor one lakh of rupees.

The money was brought to Varun's house; the sculptor was delighted at his good fortune and remembering his promise, told Varun he must accept half the amount.

Varun's wife threw up her

hands in horror. " You must not take fifty thousand rupees. Half that amount will be more than sufficient."

Varun and the sculptor looked at the good woman in amazement. " You forget what that palmist told you some years ago, " she cried, " he said that you would be worth a lakh of rupees before you died. So I am going to make sure that you never have so much money, because to me your life is more precious than a mere lakh of rupees. "

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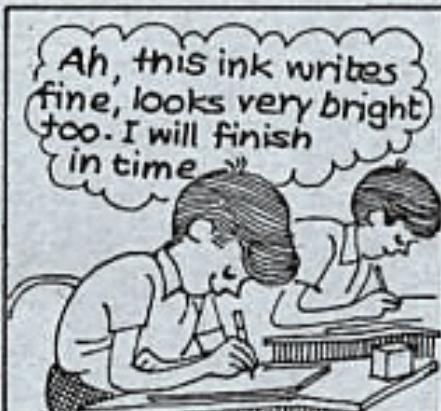
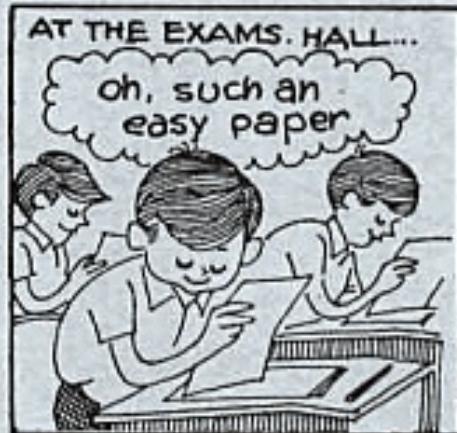
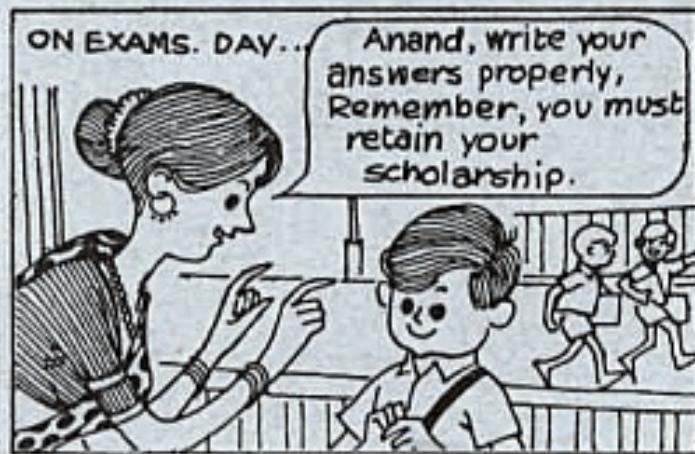


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## Anand nearly lost his Scholarship!



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